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To

Our Dearest Coleridge
with the respects of
the Author

K/a

LECTURES

UPON THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.

BY

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BROWN PROFESSOR IN ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE substance of this book was originally written, in the winter of 1853-4, as an introduction to courses of prelections in the department of Ecclesiastical History. This will account for its prevailing reference to this department, as well as for the tone of direct address which occasionally characterizes it. At the same time, it is hoped that the work will be found to have a general reference to all species of historical inquiry, and may contribute to deepen and widen the growing interest in the most comprehensive of the sciences.

Theological Seminary, Andover, }
Jan. 2, 1856.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.

LECTURE I.

THE ABSTRACT IDEA OF HISTORY.

IN order to the successful investigation of any subject, it is necessary, first of all, to form a comprehensive and clear conception of its essential nature. — Without such an antecedent general apprehension, the mind is at a loss where to begin, and which way to proceed. The true idea of any object, is a species of preparatory knowledge which throws light over the whole field of inquiry, and introduces an orderly method into the whole course of examination. It is the clue which leads through the labyrinth; the key to the problem to be solved.

It may appear strange and irrational, at first glance, to require a knowledge of the *intrinsic* nature of that which is to be examined, in order that it may be examined, and before the examination. At first sight, it may seem as if this perception of the true idea of a

thing, should be the result, and not the antecedent, of inquiry, and that nothing of an *a priori* nature should be permitted to enter into the investigations of the human mind in any department of knowledge. To require in the outset a comprehensive idea, of History e. g., and then to use this as an instrument of investigation, seems to invert the true order of things, and to convert ignorance into knowledge by some shorter method than that of study and reflection. But what is the matter of fact? Does the scientific mind start off upon its inquiries in every direction, without any pre-conceived ideas as to where it is going, and what it expects to find? Is the human understanding such a *tabula rasa*, that it contributes nothing of its own, towards the discovery of truth, but, like the mirror, servilely reflects all that is brought before it, without regard to reflections and distortions? We have only to watch the movements of our minds to find that we carry with us into every field of investigation an antecedent idea, which gives more or less direction to our studies, and goes far to determine the result to which we come. We are not now concerned with the reasonableness or unreasonableness of this fact; we are now only alluding to it as an actual matter of fact which appears in the history of every studious and reflecting mind. Even if we deem it to be irrational

and groundless, and for this reason endeavor to do away with it in our studies, we find it to be impossible. If we begin the study of Philosophy, it is with a general conception of its nature; and one that is continually re-appearing in our philosophizing. If we commence the examination of Christianity itself, we find that we already have an idea of its distinctive character as a religion, which exerts a very great influence upon our inquiry into its constituent elements, and particularly upon our construction of its doctrines.* The demand therefore so constantly made by the Rationalist of every century, that the mind must be entirely vacant of *a priori* ideas and initiating preconceptions; in his phraseology, must be free from "prejudices;" in order that it may make a truly scientific examination, is a demand that cannot be complied with, even if there were a disposition to do so on the part of the inquirer, and is not complied with even on the part of him who makes it. With the *origin* of such guiding ideas we have no concern at this time. It is

* This idea contains such pre-judgments as; that Christianity is a *supernatural* religion; that its author is *Divine*; that its truths are *mysterious*, i. e. are infinite, and therefore cannot be exhausted by the finite intelligence. Notice that these judgments are *a priori*; i. e. they flow from the *nature of the case*. For if Christianity is a religion differing in *kind* from all natural religions, then the above elements are *necessarily* involved in the conception and theory of it.

sufficient for our purpose to indicate their actual existence in the human mind, and their actual influence and operation in all departments of its investigation. With the *correctness* of these ideas, on the contrary, we have a much closer concern ; for if they exist in spite of all efforts to be rid of them, and make themselves visible in all the investigations of the student, and in all the products of his investigation, it is certainly of the first importance that they be true ideas ; that is, exact correspondents to the real nature of things.

What then is the true idea of History with which we should commence our studies and reflections in this department of knowledge, and how may we know that it is the true idea, and therefore entitled to guide our inquiries, and shape our constructions ? The correct answer to these questions will constitute the Philosophy of History.

It is now very generally conceded that, in its abstract and essential nature, History is *Development*, and with this we agree. The idea of an unfolding is identical with that of a history. In thinking of the one, we unavoidably think of the other, and this evinces an inward coincidence between the two conceptions. Unceasing motion, from a given point, through several stadia, to a final terminus, is a characteristic belong-

ing as inseparably to a historic process as to that of any evolution whatsoever. In bringing before our minds, the passage of an intellectual or a moral principle from one degree of energy and efficiency to another, in the history of a nation, or of mankind, we unavoidably construe it as a continuous and connected career. The same law of *organic sequence* prevails within the sphere of mind and of freedom that works in the kingdom of matter and of necessity, so that terms applied to the connected events and processes of the natural world, have a strict application in the moral, and a far more significant meaning. The phrases, "principles of history," "laws of history," "ideas and germs in history," which occur so frequently in essays and treatises as to become monotonous, and which render the invention of synonymes and circumlocutions one of the most difficult of rhetorical expedients, all go to prove that the spontaneous conception of History is that of a progressive expansion from a primitive involution.

If any one doubts whether such phraseology is anything more than the play of the fancy, and is inclined to believe that there is no actual correspondent, to these terms, in the truth and fact of the case, let him ask himself the question: "if History has no real and solid substance, of the nature of germs, principles, ideas,

laws and forces, then what substantial matter has it at all? If these are all unreal, the mere fictions of the fancy, with no objective correspondents in that career of man on the globe which every one concedes to be a reality, and the most solemn of all, then what is the real essence of History?" For throwing out such deeper and more vital contents as we are speaking of, there remain only the unconnected materials of names, dates, and occurrences; a multitudinous sea of effects without causes; an ocean of phenomena without a single supporting ground; a chaos of atoms with no sort of connection or intermingling. A search after the truth and substance of the department, in this instance, as in all others, carries the mind below the surface to constituent elements and principles, so that it perceives the world of Human History to be, *after its own kind*, as full of germs, laws, and forces, as the globe beneath our feet; and that the property of reality; of forceful influential existence; is as predicable of the former as of the latter.

This essential substance of History is continually passing through a motive process. The germ is slowly unfolding as it is the nature of all germs to do. Egyptian wheat may sleep in the swathes and foldings of a mummy, through three thousand springs, but the purpose of its creation cannot be thwarted except by

the destruction of its germinal substance. It was created to grow, and notwithstanding this long interval of slumbering life the development begins the instant the moist earth closes over it. In like manner an idea which originally belongs to the history of humanity may be hindered in its progress, and for ages may seem to be out of existence; yet it is none the less in existence and a reality. It is all the while a factor in the earthly career of mankind, and the historian who should throw it out of the account would misconceive and misrepresent the entire historic process. An idea of human reason, like popular liberty, e. g., may make no external appearance for whole periods, but its re-appearance, with an energy of operation heightened by its long suppression in the consciousness of nations, is the most impressive of all proofs that it has a necessary existence in human nature, and is destined to be developed. A doctrine of Divine reason, like that of justification by Christ's atonement, is a positive truth which has been lodged in the christian mind by Divine Revelation, and is destined to an universal influence, a complete development, in and through the church; notwithstanding that some branches and ages of the church have lost it out of their religious experience.—Whatever has been *inlaid* either in matter or in mind by the Creator of both, is destined by Him and under

his own superintendence to be evolved; and of all such necessary matter, be it in natural or in moral history, we may say, that not a particle of it will be annihilated; it will pass through the predetermined stages of an expanding process and obtain a full exhibition.

1. Proceeding, then, to the analytic definition of this idea of development, which enters so thoroughly into the theory and philosophy of History, the first characteristic that strikes our notice is the *necessary connection of parts*. Isolation is impossible. No single part can stand alone and exist by itself. The principle of connection binds all together, so that the part exists only in and for the whole. Atoms, in the original and strict meaning of the term, are no constituents of a process of evolution, and the atomic theory can throw no light upon such a process. The atom, by the very etymology, is entirely disconnected from all besides itself. Matter has been cut down, ideally, to that infinitesimal point at which it constitutes the very first element, and, consequently, is now out of all connection, a single independent unit by itself. No such element as this, unassimilated and remaining so, can be a rudimental part in a development. Nothing that asserts an isolated existence, and obstinately refuses to enter into connections, can go into an evolution.

The atomic particles of a heap of sand, e. g., can never be part or particle of a process of growth, because each exists by and for itself. A rope of sand is the symbol of disconnection.

If now we test History by this first characteristic of a development, do we not find exact agreement between the two conceptions? History is a continuous line of connections. We can no more conceive of a true break or perfect disconnection in it, than in the current of a river. Though it naturally divides into periods and ages, distinguished from each other by epochal points, yet there is no separation at these points. The epoch itself, like a living joint in the human frame, is itself a tie by which the parts are articulated together and constitute one continuous organism. It is as impossible to find a real break and absolute disconnection in History, as in nature. In nature, nothing but a miracle can stop the onward flow of a stream and wall up the waters on each side of a dry space in its channel, and nothing but a new fiat of creative power could now sever the human race into two halves, each of which should be entirely separate from the other, and between which there should be no more reciprocity of connection and influence than there now is between the angelic hosts and the human race. As the Historian follows the

line backwards up toward the point of beginning, he finds the succeeding linked to the preceding, civilization joining on upon civilization, arts and inventions clinging to arts and inventions further up the line, literatures and religions tied to preceding ones ; in short, he never comes to a point where there are no connected antecedents until he reaches the beginning of human history, where the basis for the whole process was laid by a fiat, supernatural, and creative.*

2. The second characteristic of a development is the *natural connection of parts*. The sequence is not arbitrary and capricious ; mere juxtaposition without any rational coherence. The two parts that are connected have a mutual adaptation to each other. The one was evidently intended to succeed the other, and the other evidently prepares for, and expects, the one. There is, consequently, nothing strange or whimsical in a genuine evolution, either in the sphere of nature or of spirit. Everything advances with a tranquil uniformity that precludes startling and unexpected changes, because each and every part is a preparation

* Back of the creative act there is no development. History is in time solely, and pertains solely to the finite and created. It implies succession and evolution, and therefore cannot pertain to a Being who, unlike his works, is not subject to unfolding processes of any kind, but is "the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever."

for that which is to come. Any movement in nature is always impressive from the perfect serenity with which it proceeds. Be it on a small, or on a large scale, be it the blowing of a rose, or the gorgeous death of the forest after the bloom and fulness of summer, the process is as quiet as Spring, as still as Autumn.

Were connection in an evolution unnatural, were it whimsical and capricious, the impression made by it would be very different from what it actually is. — That *fortuitous* connection of parts, of which atheism in ancient and in modern times makes so much, is incompatible with the doctrine of development. — This latter requires *natural and adapted* connection, and hence a presiding intelligence that sees and prepares the end from the beginning. It is indeed true, that the idea which we are analyzing has been employed in an atheistic manner, and enters largely into all pantheistic methods. Of this we shall speak hereafter, and against it, we shall endeavor to guard, when examining the limitations and applications of the idea. But even at this point in the discussion, it is very obvious, that provided the basis and germ of the evolution is not supposed to be self-originated, but is referred to the fiat of a Creator who is entirely above it, and out of it, and the absolute disposer of it ; provided

it is regarded as a pure creation from nothing, then the *naturalness* of the sequences, from that initial point, furnishes one of the most convincing arguments against the doctrine of chance. Were there merely hap-hazard connection without inward coherence, there would be no evidence of an adaptive power, and an intelligent Author of the process. But seeing, as we do, in every genuine evolution, a prophetic anticipation of the succeeding in every element of the preceding, beholding, as we do, a calm, and, as it were, semi-intelligent progress from point to point, in this "thing of life," the notion of fortuity is banished at once from the mind.

If now we test History by this second characteristic of a development, we again see the coincidence and identity of the two conceptions. Nothing is more natural in its connections than History. Symmetrical gradations, expected transitions, anticipated terminations, appear all along its course. Nothing is abrupt and saltatory in the historic movement, but one thing follows on after another with all the ease and naturalness of physical growth itself. There are convulsions and revolutions in the process, it is true, but they are always prepared for. They may indeed, and they often do, burst upon the notice of the living actors in them with the suddenness and crash of a thunderbolt

from a clear sky, but it is because the living actors are unthinking actors, and give no heed to the significant premonitions. The student of History however, the reflecting mind that is not so caught in this mighty stream of tendency as to be unable to rise above it and see the historic preparation, is never startled in this manner. He sees the awful preparation in the preceding centuries of tyranny, of poverty, of ignorance, of irreligion. Upon his mind it is no sudden shooting of a meteor from the depths of space into the totally black vault of night, but a true sun-rise. For him, "far off its coming shone." Yet the student sees only what really exists. He does not make history, but finds it; and he finds it, even in its wildest and apparently most capricious sections, a genuine unfolding or series of natural connections.

3. The third characteristic of a development is the *organic connection* of the parts. In this we reach the summit of the series, and arrive at the most significant and fruitful property. For the connection between two things may be both necessary and natural, and yet not organic. Mechanical connection is such. Take, for example, two cog wheels in a machine. — Here the parts are necessarily connected; that is, they have no value except in relation to each other. And they are naturally connected; that is, they are adapted

by their construction to play into each other. But there is no higher bond than this merely external and mechanic one. There is connection, but no inter-connection. The term "organic," consequently, merits fuller examination than either of the others that have been employed in the analysis.

(a) Perhaps no better definition of an organism, can be given, than that of Kant. As distinguished from a mechanism, he defines it as "*a product in which each and every part is, reciprocally, means and end.*"* If we look at the human body, for example, we find that each constituent portion must be regarded, now, as the sole end for which the whole exists, and, then again, as merely the means or instrument by which the whole exists. The flesh in one aspect of it, is the end for which the functions of respiration, circulation, secretion, digestion, and locomotion, are carried on. — In one view of them, all these great processes have for their sole object this clothing of the immortal with its mortality. And yet we see again, that the production of this tissue is itself only a means whereby these systems of respiration, circulation, digestion, and secretion, are themselves kept in operation. The whole body exists for the eye, as truly as the eye exists for the whole body; for if this, or any other, member be

* Urtheilskraft, § 65.

maimed or mutilated, the entire vital force of the organism is at once subsidized and set to work to repair the injury. It is this *reciprocity* in the relation of the parts, that betokens the organic connection. — It is this existence of the part for the whole, and of the whole for the part, that sets an organism so much higher up the scale of existence than a mechanism.

An organic development, consequently, be it within the sphere of nature or of mind, is one in which all the elements and agencies mutually relate to each other, and mutually influence each other. Intercommunication, intermingling, action and re-action ; these and such like, are the terms that set our thoughts upon the trail of such a constantly shifting and changing process as that of an expanding germ. For it is because the conception, which we are endeavoring to define, is so full of pliant, elastic, and interfusing, properties, that it is so difficult to fix it in language. It is because the word "development," is so allied to that other most inexplicable word "life," that a writer has done the best that can be done, if, by his approximate statements, he has merely wakened the mind to an intimation of the meaning, and set it musing upon the suggestive but mysterious thought.

(b) Again, this action and re-action, this interconnection and intermingling, implies *inward and unceas-*

ing motion in an organism. Whenever a development comes to a total stop it comes to a *dead* stop. — Movement is inseparable from the conception, and hence the adjective “progressive” is always connected with the substantive, either expressly or by ellipsis: — The notion of an incessant flux and reflux of the elements and properties, is as inseparable from the idea of an evolution, as it is incompatible with that of artificial composition. In the instance of mechanical production, the motion is all *ab extra*; in the mind of the workman. His work, after all that his inventive genius has done to it, is as hard, immobile, and internally dead, as it ever was. It has in it nothing of an expansion, because the living principle by which it was originated is not in it, but in the mind of the mechanic. This, it is true, is a living thing, a living soul, but it is unable to breathe itself, as a principle of growth and formation, into its rigid, wooden or metallic product. The story of Pygmalion and his statue is still a fable. The “breathing” marble, and the “glowing” canvas are still, and ever, figures of speech. No product of finite power can be organic; for there is no pervasive moulding of the elements, no assimilation of the rudiments, no internal stir and fusion, in the work of the creature.

(c) Again, an organic process implies *potentiality*,

as the basis of it. It is of importance, at this point, to direct attention to the distinction between a creation and a development, and thereby preclude the pantheistic employment of the latter idea. A development is simply the unfolding of that which has been previously folded up, and not the origination of entity from non-entity. The *growth* of a germ is not the creation of it, but is merely the expansion of a substance already existing. All attempts, therefore, to explain the *origin* of the universe by the doctrine of development or expansion, like the Indian Cosmogony, drive the mind back from point to point in a series of secondary evolutions, still leaving the inquiry after the primary origin and actual beginning of things unanswered. For it is not creation, but only emanation, when the world is regarded as the unfolding of an eternal potency. Such a conception as this latter, is, moreover, metaphysically absurd, for the idea of undeveloped being has no rational meaning except in reference to the temporal and the finite. Progressive evolution within the Divine nature, would imply a career for the Deity in which He was passing from less to more perfect stages of existence, and would thus bring Him within the realm of the relative and conditioned. Latency is necessarily excluded from the Eternal One, by virtue of that absolute perfection

and metaphysical self-completeness whereby his being is "without variableness or shadow of turning."* His uncreated essence is incapable of self-expanding processes, and hence the created universe must be of a secondary essence which is the pure make of his sheer *fiat*. To the question, therefore, which still and ever returns; "how does this potential basis come into existence? to what, or to whom, do these germs of future and unceasing processes owe their origin?" the theist gives but one answer. He applies the doctrine of creation out of nothing, to all germinal substance whatsoever.

For the Deity, though self-complete and incapable of development himself, has yet made that which is potential and destined to an unfolding. He has created a universe that is full of latent powers and agencies. The works of his hand not only display excellence in the very first moments of their existence, but reveal a still more marvellous excellence as they unfold and evolve their interior capacities. The whole progress of natural science is a gaze of admiration, and should be an anthem of adoration, towards

* The whole fabric of modern Pantheism rests upon this *petitio principii*, viz: that the doctrine of development has the same legitimate application within the sphere of the Infinite and Eternal, that it has within that of the Finite and Temporal.

an Architect who has *inlaid* that which is still more wonderful than what appears on the surface; who has provided in the single, instantaneous, creative, act of his omnipotence, for an evolution which is to run on under his own superintendence* through all coming ages, until stopped by the same miraculous fiat. — In this property of potentiality, thus strictly defined and distinguished, we have one of the most absolute essentials of a development. If this conception is unreal, then is that of evolution. If we cannot conceive of, and believe in, the previous creation and deposit of a material, in order that it may be used at a future time, of the implanting of a principle which is to manifest itself, it may be, ages ahead, of the predetermination of a process and a preparation for it long before it becomes an actuality; if all such ideas as these are visionary, and all such thinking as this has no correspondent in the world of reality; then the idea of an organic development is inconceivable and absurd. — The best argument in its favor, however, would be to throw it all away, by thinking it all away, and then

* It is obvious to remark here, that at no point in its history can a created existence become self-subsistent. Hence all processes of development must be regarded as conducted beneath a maintaining energy from God, which, in technical phrase, is *Providence* in distinction from *Creation*. The predetermination of the process, and the preparation for it, in the same technical phraseology is the *Divine Decree*.

seriously ask the question, "what solid thing is now left either in the created universe of nature or of mind?" Expel the fact of potency, of latent powers and principles, from the sphere of the Created, in which alone as we have remarked above it has any application, and nothing is left but the phenomena of the instant, or a world of shadows and spectra.

(d) Finally, an organic development implies, *identity and sameness of original substance* in all the phenomenal changes that accompany the expanding process. Those who have confounded the idea which we are defining, with that of creation, have also misapprehended it at this point. The gradual advance in an evolution from something old to something new, is not a progress to something *absolutely* new; i. e., new in the sense of never having had any sort of existence before. A development can never produce anything absolutely aboriginal. The Creator alone can do this, and he does it when by his fiat he calls the germ with all its potentiality into being. An evolution cannot add an iota to the sum of created substance. It is confined, by the supernatural and creative power that called its germ into existence, to a predetermined course and task; which is simply, and purely, and exactly, to put forth what has been put in, to evolve just what has been involved.

It follows, consequently, that the progressive advance and unfolding which is to be seen all along the line of a development, is simply the expansion over a wider surface of that which from the instant of its creation has existed in a more invisible and metaphysical form. The progress or gain is formal and not material, external and not internal, visible and not invisible. Whether we take a seed like the acorn, or an entity like the human race, it is evident that development can create no new primary substance, or essential principle, in either. The utmost which the vivific life in each instance can do, is to assimilate already existing materials in order to its own manifestation. The last individual oak preserves its identity of substance, and sameness of essential principle, with the first acorn, and the generations of individual men are not, so many hundred millions of repetitions of the creative act, but merely a serial exhibition of the result of the *single fiat* in Eden; of the one human species, or common substance of humanity, with the origin of which, *the creation of man, as distinguished from his propagation*, commenced and terminated. For if, on the one hand, there were an annihilation and subtraction of the old aboriginal matter, or, on the other, a creation and addition of a new, there would be a departure from the archetype, and the tree would be another

than the oak, and the individual would not be a true specimen of humanity. But such deviations are precluded ; for this potential basis, from which the organic development starts, is the involution that contains, not only all the essential substance of the process, but also the law by which it is to be evolved and exhibited ; so that while there is unceasing change and constant advance in the outward manifestation, there is perfect identity and sameness in the inward essence.

Passing, now, from the tangled wilderness of analytic definition, into the level and open fields of application and illustration ; if we test History by this third characteristic of a development, we shall see more plainly than ever, that the two conceptions agree with each other. History is certainly characterized by reciprocal action in its elements. Ideas, principles, laws, forces, events, and men, are constantly acting and reacting upon each other from the beginning to the end of a historic process. Everything influences everything. Everything receives influence from everything. It is impossible to make a separation between the factors, so that this interaction and intermingling shall stop at a given point. Take a single feature of Secular History, for illustration the Political Revolutions, and see how this law of reciprocal action prevails. The idea of liberty, promulgated in one nation be-

comes the realized fact in another, and the realized fact, again, becomes the stimulating example which wakes the slumbering idea in a third. A treatise on government by Sydney in the seventeenth century and in monarchical England, finds its realization in the eighteenth century in the American Constitution. — This concrete example repasses the Atlantic, and becomes the mightiest of the forces that convulse the old feudal monarchy of France, and the most influential of the agencies at work in Europe for the political elevation of the masses. But that treatise of Sydney itself, was not merely the propagator of influences; it was the recipient of a most mighty influence coming down from the remote past. The currents of Greek and Roman Republicanism flowed through the English Republican. The political brain of Plato and Aristotle, of Brutus the Consul and Brutus the Patriot, was the brain in the heart of Sydney.

If we look at any of the processes in the natural world, do we find any more convincing proofs of interaction and reciprocity of agencies, than we find in the world of human society? If the terms action and reaction are not figurative in the former sphere, are they not full of the most solid meaning in the latter? And is it not the true end and aim of the student of history, to make this play of living agencies and influ-

ences as real to his own mind and feelings, as its correspondent is to the student of nature? The modern naturalist cannot for a moment believe that nature is a mechanism, and that organism is a fiction and metaphor in this realm. A thousand treatises, each a thousand times more ingenious than that one in which Des Cartes * attempts to demonstrate that all so-called vital forces in the lower animals are in reality mechanical ones, and that the body of the brute is as much an artificial production as a watch, could not for an instant interrupt the sure belief of the natural philosopher, that the physical world exhibits in all parts of it a process of organic expansion, and that natural objects are the products of a law of life and growth. The conviction that there is an internal and not merely fanciful analogy between the worlds of nature and of mind, so that the same fundamental law of expansion prevails in both, should firmly possess the mind of the inquirer in the department of human history. — The relation between the subjective principle and the outward stimuli is precisely the same in one instance as in the other. Is there any more real reciprocal relation between the tropical Fauna or Flora, and the temperature, amount of atmospheric moisture,

* "He denied the supermaterialism of animal life as many are now denying the supernaturalism of Christianity." Twesten's *Dogmatik*. I. 318.

elevation of the land above the sea, prevailing winds, amount of sun light, geological formation, and soil, of the tropical regions; than there is between the Celtic, Gothic, and Roman components of national character, the insular isolating residence, the influence of Greek and Roman literatures, of commerce, of the Christian religion, of the intestine wars of the Roses and the wars for foreign conquest; between all these historical elements and agencies; and the historical development of England? Ought not the analysis and contemplation of this reciprocity of agencies to produce the same sense of organic connections, the same fresh feeling of a living process, and the same enthusiastic wonder, with which the naturalist examines material nature; with which a Gilbert White minutely surveys physical nature within the limits of his rural parish; with which a Humboldt surveys the cosmos? *

* "Those truths are always most valuable which are most historical, that is, which tell us most about the past and future states of the object to which they belong. In a tree, for instance, it is more important to give the appearance of energy and elasticity in the limbs which is indicative of growth and life, than any particular character of leaf, or texture of bough. It is more important that we should feel that the uppermost sprays are creeping higher and higher into the sky, and be impressed with the current of life and motion which is animating every fibre, than that we should view the exact pitch of relief with which those fibres are

Again, is not History like any other organic development, characterized by an inward and unceasing movement? Is there any stagnation or immobility in it? Seize the process of human life at any point you please, and do you not find it stirring like a force and beating like a pulse? Even the most externally motionless period has its fierce passions and intense emotions. The darkest of the Dark Ages, the more it is studied, the more is it seen to have a human interest. The most stagnant stratum of the Dead Sea undulates. It has been said that the savage has no history; that there is in this form of society only a dead monotony unenlivened by the play of human feelings and the struggle of human passions. But this is not so.—As, according to Dr. Johnson, the biography of the most unimportant individual on the globe, were

thrown out against the sky. For the first truths tell us tales about the tree, about what it has been, and will be, while the last are characteristic of it only in its present state, and are in no way talkative about themselves. Talkative facts are always more interesting and more important than silent ones. So again the lines in a crag which mark its stratification, and how it has been washed and rounded by water, or twisted and drawn out in fire, are more important, because they tell more than the stains of the lichens which change year by year, and the accidental fissures of frost or decomposition; not but that both of these are historical, but historical in a less distinct manner and for shorter periods.” — *Modern Painters*, I. chap. vi.

it fully written out so that the life should appear just and fully as it was, would overflow with interest and entertainment for all men, so the real every-day life of even a savage horde would be an addition to Universal History that would waken earnest attention. Who would not eagerly peruse the history of a nomadic Tartar tribe, if it were written with the simple and minute fidelity of a chronicle of Froissart? * Who would not even spare some of the more outwardly imposing sections of General History, if in their place he could have a true unvarnished tale of the wanderings of one of those Scythian or Celtic races who were the first to come westward from Central Asia, the birth-place and cradle of mankind? What a charm and a light would be thrown over the earlier history of Greece and Rome, if a veritable account of one or more branches of that great Pelasgic race; that *savage* source of "the Beauty that was Greece and the Grandeur that was Rome" should be discovered among the manuscripts of a cloister?

But the secret of the charm, which is thus felt in any and every section of human history, lies in the fact that there is an unceasing movement, an incessant stir and fermentation, in each and every section. The

* One of the most unique and thrilling papers of De Quincey is "The flight of a Tartar Tribe."

ocean itself is not more unresting than the history of man. The oceanic currents are not more distinct and unmistakable than those streams of tendency which sway eastward and westward, northward and southward, in the migration of nations, in the rise and decline of civilizations, in the founding and fall of empires, in the alternations of national glory and decay. *Motion*, both internal and external, is the characteristic which first impresses the historical student. In passing from other domains of inquiry into this, he finds himself to be coming out from quiet vales into the region of storms; from the place of secured results and garnered products, into the place of active preparation and production. In the sphere of Poetry, there is only the still air and golden light of setting suns. In the sphere of Science, the mind is in the serene region of pure thought. But in History, the inquirer comes out into the world of agencies, actors, and actions, where everything is under motion, and, in the Baconian phrase, all "resounds like the mines."

Again, does not History, like any other organic process, rest upon a basis of potentiality? Human life is the Old in the New; the old being in a new aspect. History does not create its wealth and variety of material as it goes along, but merely expands a

varied latency that was originated when the morning stars sang together. Potentiality meets us at every point, and accounts for the lights and shadows of the "pictured page." National differences and peculiarities, and consequently all that is unique and distinctive in the career of nations, must be referred to a provision made therefor in the day of man's creation. Compare the Rome of the age of Numa Pompilius with the Rome of the age of Augustus Cæsar, and while the latter displays elements and characteristics that had lain so entirely dormant, in preceding sections of this national history, that if Rome had gone out of political existence in the struggle with the Samnite or the Carthaginian the human mind never would have known of their existence, yet would they for this reason not have been real entities? It is indeed true, that they would not have been *manifested*, but would they not just as really have been rudiments in that original political germ or basis for a nation, which, whether completely unfolded or not, had a wholeness and rounded capacity of its own, because it was an integral part of the "good" and perfect creation of God, in the day that "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life?" A potential existence is by no means an imaginary or fictitious one. A germ may

not be permitted to run its course of evolution, and display all its marvellous inlay of elements and individuals; but it is none the less a fixed quantity by itself, and must be estimated by what it was primarily endowed with by the Creator. If a race should be stopped short in mid-career, by the same fiat that created it in the beginning, its dignity and standing in the scale of universal being would have to be determined by its created capacities; not by what had actually come forth, but by what had been originally put in; by the amount of life and the quantum of varied latency that had been primarily summed up in it.

It is by virtue of this potential basis that History exhibits that union of two opposite properties, permanence and progression, which is so baffling to the mind. It has a permanent identity and sameness, because it exhibits the same species of being and the same eternal truth in all its sections. It also presents a constant variety and change, because it shows this same human nature, and this same common verity, in new forms. Each age and period is as fresh and original in its appearance, as if it were the first in the series, and looked upon the new earth for the first time that it was ever looked upon, and lived the first human life that ever was lived. This co-inherence

and co-working of the two factors, of the Old and the New, of the Conservatism and the Progress, is the very essence of History. It is difficult, we are aware, to seize and hold both conceptions at one and the same time, as the constant debate between the man of Conservatism and the man of Progress shows. It is easy and natural to separate what God has joined together, and to make choice of the one or of the other characteristic, as the key to all History and the foundation of all practical life and action. It is simpler to say that History is permanent without progress, or else that it is progressive without permanence, than to say that it is a true development and therefore *both* permanent and progressive. The extremists upon both sides have a much easier task than the one who occupies the central position between them. A simple idea is much easier to define and manage than a complex one. But it is not so fertile, so prolific, or so completely true. If simplicity and facility of management were all that the philosopher has to care for, the great comprehensive ideas of science would soon disappear; for they are neither uncomplex nor facile. "The simplest of governments," says Webster while defending the excellent complexity of republicanism, "is a despotism." The simplest of theories is the theory of an extremist.

We have now given a theoretic answer to the first of the two questions which met us in the outset, viz., What is the abstract idea of History? by specifying the chief characteristics of a process of development, and pointing out their identity with those of an historical process. It is not pretended that this analysis and comparison is a complete one, and that nothing more could be said upon the subject; that it is a perfectly clear one and could not be made more lucid. Yet no one who has ever made the attempt; an attempt much more common now, than it was in the last century when a different intellectual method prevailed; to treat a subject *physiologically*,* will be hasty to complain of the lack of thoroughness, or especially of plainness. — Let any one peruse the tracts and treatises, composed by many able minds within the last twenty years, upon this general subject of progressive development, and observe their comparative vagueness, and he will be convinced that it is, intrinsically, one of the most difficult subjects to discuss, in the whole philosophical catalogue. For it implies the idea of life; one of the most familiar, and at the same time most mysterious and baffling, of all ideas. It necessitates a physiologi-

* The term is employed in its etymological meaning; to denote a method which proceeds from the doctrine, or *rationale*, of the intrinsic nature of an object.

cal or *dynamic* method of treating the subject; a method which compels the mind, if we may so say, to a subterranean labor and examination; a method therefore that precludes that liveliness of mental movement, that perfect distinctness of statement, and especially that opulence of illustration and bright sparkling diction and style, which are characteristic of a more outward mode of investigation. To trace a law of life, is a far more difficult and arduous attempt for authorship, than to draw a beautiful picture. To work the mind slowly, pertinaciously, and thoroughly, into a deep central process of development, running like a magnetic current through ages of time, winding here, thwarted there, uprearing itself and coming forth in reformations and revolutions, and then retiring down into such depths of dormancy and slumber that its re-awakening seems almost an impossibility; to treat History in this profound and dynamic manner, is far more difficult, than by the aid of a versatile mind and a lively fancy to cause a series of brilliant pictures, of dazzling dissolving views, to pass with rapidity before the mind of a rapid reader. But which method is the most fruitful and fertilizing? Which is most suggestive? Which is best adapted for the foundation of a course of study and investigation? Which is capable of an unlimited expansion, and influence upon the

mind of a student? Grant that, in the beginning, both the writer and the reader feel the need of further reflection and still plainer statements, so that there is a sort of unsatisfaction in both; yet is not this very unrest, a thorn and spur to still more profound and clear intuitions? This is one great benefit to be derived from the adoption, and reception into the mind, of an idea like that of development. — Its meaning is not so entirely upon the surface, and so level to the most thoughtless comprehension, that he who runs may read it, and exhaust its whole significance in a twinkling. There is ever something in reserve, something still to be pondered over, something still to be more distinctly elucidated and stated. The idea is itself a seed sown in the mind, having an endless power of germination and fructification. A seed is not so striking or so sparkling an object as a diamond; it does not make such an instantaneous impression, and it is a thousandfold more full of mystery. But while the gem merely flickers its cold glittering flashes, generation after generation, upon the single brow of beauty or of pride, the seed is repeating itself in the harvests of a continent, in the physical comfort and thereby the general weal of a race. Easiness of immediate apprehension, distinctness and vivacity of first statement, facility of being managed, ought all

to be set second to depth, comprehensiveness of scope, richness and variety of contents, and fertility of influence, when selecting an idea that is to constitute the basis of a department of knowledge, and guide the investigations of a student through its whole long and wide domain. It is for this reason, and not because a more perspicacious and facile method could not be selected, that we desire in the beginning to explain so far as is possible, and to recommend, what has been termed the theory of *genetic development*, as the one which has most affinity with the real nature of History, and which consequently is the best *organon* or instrument for its investigation. The great change that has taken place, within the present century, in the way of conceiving and constructing History, is owing to the adoption, and use, of a method that was foreign to the mind and the intellectual tendencies of the eighteenth century. One only needs to compare history like that of Dr. Robertson with history like that of Dr. Arnold, or history like that of Gibbon with history like that of Niebuhr, to see that from some cause or other, a great change has come over the department within fifty years. There is no improvement in respect to style. For who has excelled the clean purity of Robertson's diction, the elegant simplicity of Hume's narrative, the harmonious yet ener-

getic pomp of Gibbon's description? Perhaps there is, in general, a falling off in respect to formal properties. But, on the other hand, is there not a vast improvement in all the material properties of historical composition? Is not the point from which men and events are now contemplated, far more central and commanding? Is not much more made of prevailing ideas, general tendencies, prominent individualities, in short of the germs and dynamic forces of History, than was made during the last century? Are not the lessons of this science far more impressive and solemn now, than they were as taught in 1750? Is not the department itself exerting an influence upon other departments, far more modifying and transforming than formerly? In short, if History may have lost something of that elegance and transparency which characterizes a product of art, has it not gained far more of that vitality, and power of influential impression, which belongs to a product of nature? The cause of this change, in the spirit and influence of the department, is traceable directly to a growing disposition to regard the history of Man, as well as that of Nature, as an organic process, and consequently as subject to a law of life and growth. Indeed it is noticeable, that this change has come in contemporaneously with a corresponding change in the method

of contemplating Nature itself. As Natural Science has become more dynamic, so has History. The naturalist of the present day is not willing, like his predecessor a century ago, to regard life as the result of organization, and then to explain organization into a very curious and recondite arrangement of atomic matter. Mysterious as the principle itself may be, the modern investigator now prefers to assume a vital principle, as the origin and cause of all organization, and of all those external phenomena which were once explained according to the mechanical view and theory of nature. For though he starts with a mystery which probably he can never clear up, yet he thereby introduces a clearness, a consistency, a naturalness and vitality, into all the facts and phenomena of his science, which were never attained by the elder naturalists. His intellectual selfdenial in the beginning, is rewarded richly in the end. In like manner, the historian, by taking upon himself the severer task of regarding History as a process of living moral development, and of penetrating into its intricate organic connections, is in the end rewarded for his disposition to be thorough and profound, by finding the subject of his investigations far more prolific and impressive than it ever was before. He is also rewarded by finding that this philosophic method, exacting as it is, in the beginning,

upon the closest reflection and strictest discipline of the mind, in the end throws a clear light upon those deeper and darker portions of History, upon which not a ray of light is cast by a more superficial and easy mode of examination.

Inasmuch, as the department of Church History has felt the influence of the dynamic method, much more thoroughly than other portions of the history of Man have as yet, and the Church Historian been the most successful in applying the doctrine of development to historical materials, we shall, in the remainder of this lecture, draw our illustrations from this branch of the general subject.

One of the most valuable results, of the application of the idea of an organic process, is seen in that part of Ecclesiastical History which is denominated the History of Doctrine. This may be said to have come into existence since the adoption of the physiological method. It is indeed true that the more thoughtful of the ecclesiastical historians of the eighteenth century, such as Mosheim and the elder Planck, recognize the influence of particular doctrines, upon that course of external events to which they gave most attention; but they usually connect the doctrine, or the truth, with some individual of strong or passionate character, from whom, more than from the truth or

doctrine, the influence upon men and things proceeds. Hence in treating of the Reformation, for example, a disproportionate weight is attached to the personal religious force and wants of a single individual like Luther, or to the personal intellectual culture and aspirations of an Erasmus; to the undervaluation of that great scripture *doctrine* of justification by faith, which, together with the general religious craving of the age, in which a Luther shared so strongly and an Erasmus so feebly, was the true historic ground of the movement, the real central historic force. It is not enough to trace the processes of history to individual influence. This *pragmatic* method, as it has been termed, must rest upon that *genetic* one of which we are speaking; for the individual is rooted in the general, and all this influence of historical characters has a deeper ground in historic ideas, truths, and doctrines. But this was not seen and acted upon, until the mind of the historian was led down to the doctrines themselves, as the ultimate sources and causes. The step taken by writers like Mosheim, Walch, and Planck, in sacred history, and Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon, in secular, was one in advance, but was not the ultimate one. It was something valuable, to connect the external series of events and phenomena with the characters, opin-

ions, and acts of prominent individuals, but it was something invaluable, because indispensable to a truly philosophic history, to connect events, phenomena, prominent individuals themselves, together with the ages and great tendencies which they represented, with the great standing truths of reason and revelation, and the plans and purposes of that Supreme Being who is the author and revealer of all.

This step was taken, when the historian began to conceive and construct the facts of history, on the method of a genetic development. He then began, as this term denotes, to trace the *genesis* of the process; to seize it in its very deepest source and lowest place of origin. This necessarily compelled him to go beyond not merely the external events themselves, but also their connection with leading individuals, down to the first springs of history in the plans and purposes of God, and, in Church History especially, to the truths and doctrines which God has revealed in his written word, as the germ and measure of all true development. For it is plain that, so long as the historian confined himself to the external occurrences, and their comparatively superficial relation to individual men, he was still at a great distance from the real causes and forces of history; from the absolute centre and origin of its processes. Notwithstanding all

his pretensions to a philosophic treatment of the subject, he was still at work in an upper stratum, and busied with secondary agencies. He could reach the ultimate foundation of the whole historic superstructure, only by sinking a deeper shaft, and getting below events, and individual actions, to the revealed ideas and designs of God. For here is the origin, and this is the *genesis*. There is no source more ultimate than this. The historian who starts from this point, starts from the final centre.

We cannot, perhaps, more appropriately conclude this enunciation of the abstract idea of development, than by directing attention, for a moment, to that Church Historian who has employed it more persistently, and successfully, than any other investigator, secular or ecclesiastical. The Church History of Neander, is an embodiment of the idea of development. It is organized throughout by this single thought. — And the organization is most thorough. It pervades each historic section; the external history, the history of polity, of worship, of morality, of doctrine. Each of these sections exhibits an expanding process of evolution, either upward or downward. Each of these is reciprocally related to all the others, so that the whole, eventually, are lightly but firmly bound together into a greater organism. We do not assert that the

idea of the Christian Religion, as Neander conceives it in his own mind, is so exactly conformed to the New Testament representation, that the constructing principle of his history is entirely free from defective qualities. This would be saying more than can be of any uninspired mind. The most reverent admirer of this devout historian, must acknowledge that his construction of Church History is affected by subjective elements, that his apprehension of Christianity is sometimes unfavorably modified by the age and country in which he lived, and especially by the type of culture into which he was born and bred. But all this can be said, and should be as we believe, without denying the substantial correctness of the idea which impelled and guided his mind in the composition of his work, or imputing to him any more material errors, than the scientific mind is always liable to.

Without, therefore, entering upon any detailed criticism of Neander's conception of Christianity, which would involve a criticism of the whole work, we wish merely to allude to the remarkable perseverance, and tenacity, with which it is employed in the detection, analysis, and synthesis, of the historic processes themselves. That monotony, which is complained of by a class of critics whose aesthetic feeling is stronger

than their philosophic, is the monotony of organization. The types of organic life are necessarily few. Nature herself, is but slightly varied and variegated within this sphere. It is only in the clothing of her few archetypal forms, that she exhibits the pomp, and prodigality, of her luxuriance. It is true that Neander's method is uniform. We know beforehand what the treatment of each section will be. We know that each subject will be handled under the same fixed number of topics and categories; that each mass of material, like iron in a rolling mill, will be run through the same number and sequence of grooves. But this very rigor in the use of one idea, and the prosecution of one plan, imparts, to the product resulting from it, an interest for the thinking mind, far higher than any merely aesthetic interest can ever be, and what is still more, renders it a far more instructive and influential work for the intellect of a student, than can be originated on the other method of historical composition. It is for this reason, therefore, that while the history of Neander has less interest for him who is attracted chiefly by the secular aspects of Christianity, it has all the more for him who knows that its spiritual aspects are its distinguishing and essential ones. He who sees in Christianity, merely or mainly, a religion or an institute that has exerted a most

favorable influence upon literature, science, and art; upon civilization, government, and the physical improvement of mankind; will be dissatisfied with this author's account of it. For Neander was but little, too little, interested in these civilizing, and intellectual, influences. But he who sees in Christianity, first of all and last of all, a moral and spiritual power, destined by its Divine Author to regenerate the inmost heart of humanity, and hence intended to affect primarily the *eternal* interests of mankind, will find this stern aesthetic indifference, and naked but lofty spiritualism, of the Historian, all the more imposing and impressive. For he passes through the pomps and splendors that thicken and trail along the march of Christianity, as St. Paul did through the temples and sculptures of Athens, or the porticos and triumphal arches of Rome; with an eye too intently fixed upon more unutterable realities and more awful splendors, to be attracted, much less dazzled, by things seen and temporal. To one who seeks to know Christianity in its own living moral nature, with few or none of its secular adjuncts, the close and powerful method of Neander is exceedingly welcome, and exceedingly suggestive and fertile. And while the student of Church History is never to be a servile recipient of all the views of any mind, however learned or con-

templative, we think it may safely be said, that, from the existing literature in this department, no single work can be selected, which so well deserves as does this, to be made both a resort, and a point of departure, for his mind. While examining and pondering its contents, the inquirer will find himself, all along, in the very heart of Christianity, because the history is constructed out of the very idea of Christianity itself; that is, in its spirit and by its light.

LECTURE II.

THE NATURE, AND DEFINITION, OF SECULAR HISTORY.

IN the previous lecture, we have confined ourselves to an analysis of the abstract idea of development, in order to reach the abstract nature of History. As a consequence, we have brought into view only the universal characteristics of an expanding process, paying no regard to those particular qualities, which are discovered as soon as we begin to examine the several *species* of history that fall under the generic conception. For here, as everywhere, the concrete application of a metaphysical idea, is of equal importance with its analytic enunciation. An *a priori* statement requires to be completed by an *a posteriori* verification, in order to obtain the highest scientific value and currency.* The principal reason why the department of

* An *a priori* theory is worthless whenever the thought, in the mind, is not found to correspond with the thing, in nature. In this instance the theory is no *θεωρία*, no seeing through and seeing around, but remains what it was in the start, an hypothesis or conjecture. For the

metaphysics is in such ill repute with the popular mind, on the ground of both real and imaginary deficiencies, lies in the fact that it has not in all instances been thoroughly treated. The philosopher has been too content with conceptions in their abstract and universal forms. He has been too averse to take the second step, and do the last work; which is, after the idea has been sufficiently enucleated by logical analysis, to bring it forth from this speculative shape, and exhibit it as a concrete and working truth, or, in the phrase of Bacon, "to temper the rigor of the abstraction by the softening explanation." This is in reality more difficult to accomplish, than to merely follow the laws of logical thinking, without any regard to the refractions, and reflections, and modifications, of actual processes. To follow a pure logical sequence, is no greater task for a logical mind, than it is for a vigor-

Newtonian theory of gravitation, in the moment of its first conception in the mind of the thinker, was purely hypothetical, and, had not the whole subsequent course of astronomical science been a verification of it, would have been an hypothesis still, only an exploded one. The difference between the Alchemist's theory of occult qualities, and that of a true natural philosophy, does not lie in the employment of a different mode of formation in one instance, from that used in the other, but in the fact that the first does not stand the tests of observation and application, while the last does. Both are formed on the *a priori* method, but the *a posteriori* verification destroys in one case, and confirms in the other.

ous body to walk up a flight of stairs. The steps themselves, in both instances, perform most of the labor. The walker needs only to lift up his limbs and put them down, to be lifted upward, fifty or a hundred feet, into space, and the logician needs merely to follow the connections of an idea, to be carried through a very wide and long range of speculation. Hence the facility with which a mere logician analyzes ideas into their constituent elements, and constructs systems out of them. It is more difficult, as we have remarked, to be entirely thorough, and follow an idea out into the sphere of historical reality, and thus know it in the concrete. Had this been done more often, by the metaphysical philosopher, he would have subjected truth to a more exhaustive examination, that would have precluded those misconceptions, which so often come in subsequently to an accurate *a priori* analysis and vitiate it.

The doctrine of development, in particular, has oftentimes undergone deterioration, and lost scientific properties, by being contemplated too long and exclusively in its abstract form. Neglecting to test and clarify it by observation, some theorists in Natural Science, come to employ the idea in a sense that is contrary to the strict results of logical analysis itself, as well as contradicted by the whole course of nature.

Fastening their gaze upon the *continuity* of the process, they lose sight of its *origin*, and slide unconsciously into the notion of an eternal potentiality. — This necessitates the second absurd notion, of potentiality within potentiality, or evolution of heterogeneous germs out of homogeneous ones. The process has now lost its primitive logical simplicity, and unity, and becomes a complex and fanciful scheme of emanations. The germ is no longer a transparent and pure creation from nothing, but an obscure and mixed evolution from antecedent germs, and these, again, from their antecedents, and so backward endlessly, with ever increasing vagueness and mixture, into the abyss of chaotic being. Now setting aside the valid objections that spring out of Ethics and Religion,* it is plain that an actual questioning of

* That the ancient Oriental systems of Emanation, and their modern counterparts the pantheistic systems, are destructive of the first principles and distinctions of Ethics and Religion, is notorious. But that these same schemes are ruinous to true Science, is not so often considered. — Let any one, however, examine the stupendous system of Gnosticism, that sprung up in the 2d and 3d centuries, and he will be convinced, that such a conglomerate is incompatible with logical coherence and scientific self-consistence. Starting from a false fundamental principle, and substituting emanation for creation, every new step must be an attempt at adjustment. This introduces still more troublesome and unmanageable matter, which, again, calls for new attempts at arrangement, until an

Nature, for the facts in the case, would have preserved these theorists from this corruption of the true conception of a development, and kept them upon the truly scientific position. Nature never exhibits the evolution of one specific germ from another, and the simple observation, and remembrance, of this matter of fact, would have led the wandering theorist to retrace his steps. A verification of the abstract conception itself, by an actual reference to the organic processes actually going on in nature before his eyes, would have reminded him of the scientific truth, he was beginning to forget, that mere development cannot account for the origin of any new thing; that a germ can only protrude its own latency, and cannot inlay a foreign one. The very significant matter of fact, that one species never expands into another,* would have reminded him of the truth, which is also reached by the "high priori road" of rigorous analysis, that though a process of development can be accounted for

amorphous mass of speculation is aggregated, that is totally destitute of the homogeneity, concinnity, clearness, and nicety, of Science.

* The baffled anxiety with which a theorist, like the author of "The Vestiges of Creation," ransacks the history of Natural Science, to discover a well authenticated instance in which a higher species is developed from a lower, is instructive, as evincing his sense of the inestimable value of such a fact, for his purposes, if such an one could be found.

out of the latent potentiality at its base, this latter can be accounted for, only by recurring to the creative power of God. The careful recognition of the fact, that *in rerum natura* the expansion of a vegetable seed, even if carried on through all the aeons upon aeons of the Gnostic scheme, or the cycles upon cycles of the geological system, never transmutes it into the egg of animal life, would recall the attention of the speculatist to the self-evident proposition, that nothing can come forth, that has never been put in. The seen, and acknowledged, failure to discover any instance in which the passage from the animal to the rational soul, from the brute to the man, has been effected by the pure development of the former, would correct the vitiating metaphysics of the theorizer, and restore it to the strictly scientific and necessary statement, that a latency of an animal kind, cannot by mere expansion be converted into one entirely heterogeneous, so as to become the basis of a moral and spiritual, as distinguished from an animal, history.

This same vitiation of true metaphysics, and misapprehension of an abstract conception, is seen also within the sphere of mind, and of human history. — Theorizers here, forgetting the fact of self-will, confound the idea of development, with that of *improvement*. There is nothing in the logical conception of

an evolving process, that warrants their assertion, that all movement in the history of a moral agent must, of necessity, be normal and upward. All that is required by the *a priori* definition is, that the process shall be an expanding one, but of what species, or from what basis, is still undetermined. Forgetting the fact of free will, and the possibility of defection from law attached to it by the Creator, they deal with man, as they do with the crystal or the flower, and suppose that to say he is passing through a process of development, necessarily implies that he is advancing, like "the splendor of the grass and the glory of the flower," from one degree of excellence to another.*

* "Evil," says Emerson, (Essay on Swedenborg), "is good in the making. That pure malignity can exist, is the extreme proposition of unbelief. It is not to be entertained by a rational agent; it is atheism; it is the last profanation. The divine effort is never relaxed; the carrion in the sun, will convert itself to grass and flowers; and the man, though in brothels, or jails, or on gibbets, is on the way to all that is good and true." Extremes meet. The denial of the doctrine of human apostasy, on the ground that it is dishonorable to man, conducts very naturally to the denial of man's distinguishing and highest endowment, viz: his free will, and results in degrading human nature to the level of "carrion," and "flowers." It is sometimes asked, why God permitted sin? Perhaps it was to show, that man is a will, and has a will. Certain it is, that wherever the fact of the free and guilty fall of man is acknowledged, materializing views of man's nature do not prevail.

Here, again, as in the instance of the natural philosopher, a single observation of a fact, staring every inquirer in the face, of an *abuse of freedom*, and a consequent false unfolding in human nature, would have re-impressed upon these minds the lesson which a rigorous analysis also teaches, viz: that an organic process may be downwards, as well as upwards; one of decline and slow death, as well as of rise and bloom. The stubborn fact, of an illegitimate development going on in the very heart of humanity, and covering the whole period of human history, compels the theorizer to notice an aspect of the doctrine, he had lost sight of amidst the abstraction of Science, which is concerned with what ought to be, more than what may be, and actually is. The application of the metaphysical conception of development, to what he finds to be a stern matter of fact, preserves its scientific purity, and precision, by preventing him from surreptitiously throwing out its universality, and impartiality, whereby it is capable of an application to any process, legitimate or illegitimate, so it be an organic sequence, and surreptitiously narrowing it down to a particular species of process, viz: a normal one. For there is no more reason for regarding evolution as synonymous with improvement alone, than with degeneracy alone. Scientific universals are wide, and impartial. No

particular truth is told, or intended to be, when it is asserted that there is a process of development going on in the world. This is granted upon all sides. On coming within the sphere of free agency, it is necessary, in order to any definite and valuable statement, to determine, by actual observation, *what* it is that is being expanded; whether a primitive potentiality originated by the Creator, or a secondary one originated by the creature, *to either of which, the abstract conception of expansion is alike applicable.*

Hence, on coming down into the sphere of the concrete, we are obliged to notice the *varieties* of development. In endeavoring to apply the idea, whose nature we have analyzed, to the actual career of man on the globe, we must take into account the *peculiarity* of this career. In specifying this, we exhibit the distinctive nature of Secular History, and give its definition.

The ordinary, and common, history of mankind, as the observer in every age sees it going on before his eyes, differs from all other histories, of which he knows anything, by being contrary to the primary law of creation. All other existences, so far as he knows, are conformed to the law of their being, and their development is, consequently, legitimate and normal. Throughout all material nature, there is no possibility

of the contrary, and, consequently, there is an inevitable obedience to the creative idea, and an unvarying expansion of the original germ. The few monsters, *lusus naturæ* as we call them, are very few, and do not affect the genus, or species, to which they belong. A mal-formed crystal is an isolated thing, and its formation has no effect upon the law and process, of crystallization. A body with two heads is entirely anomalous, and uncommon, and does not, in the least, modify the operation of the general law of production. Material nature proceeds undeviatingly, because, within this sphere, there is no possibility of self-will. Development here, is both ideal and uniform. Hence, the moralist and theologian point to the perfect unfolding of the natural world, as an example, to be imitated by the voluntary spirit of man. The highest authority has set the lilies of the field before us, for our deliberate imitation; and the poet, in his distich, has briefly repeated the same truth: "Seekest thou the highest, and the greatest? the plants can teach it to thee. What they are involuntarily, that be thou voluntarily."*

And if we pass from nature into the realm of spiritual existence, we find that, with the exception of

* Schiller. Das Höchste.

man, and a portion of the angelic hosts, all voluntary beings are in allegiance to law, and their development is legitimate, and normal. For that catastrophe and fall in heaven, was scarcely a speck upon the infinite expanse of eternity. The idea of race does not apply to the angel, as it does to the man. We speak of the angelic host, but never of the angelic race. Hence the apostasy of the Son of the Morning and his followers, like the mal-formation of a crystal in the material world, was an isolated occurrence, whose effects did not extend beyond itself. Each angelic will fell for, and by, itself. Hence the general allegiance of the hierarchies continued, and continues,* so that we may say, notwithstanding this instance of deviation from the Divine law, that in the heavenly world, as in the natural, the development and the history are legitimate, and normal.

Man then stands alone; the only unloyal *race* in the universe; the only species of being which, as a *unity*, and a *whole*, has thrown itself out of the line of its true destination, and is running a false career.

* * * far the greater part have kept, I see,
 Their station ; heaven yet populous, retains
 Number sufficient to possess her realms,
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
 With ministeries due, and solemn rites.

PARADISE LOST, VII. 145-149

With the possibility, and necessary conditions of such a catastrophe, we have in this discussion no concern. It is sufficient, for the purposes of the philosophy of Secular History, to postulate its occurrence through the abuse of human freedom, by the permissive will, and decree, of God. Had, then, the development of man proceeded from the primary germ, and original inlay, it would have been ideal, and perfect. All that some theorists now say respecting the actual history of man, would then have been exactly descriptive of that normal process. Human nature would then have unfolded in all the beauty, and perfect conformity to the creative idea, which we have seen to be characteristic of the crystal, or the flower. The spontaneous, and the natural, in human history, would then have been the ideal, and the perfect.

But we know, not by an *a priori* method but as matter of fact, that the development of humanity did not proceed from this first, and proper, point of departure. The creative idea, by the Creator's permission, was not realized by the free agent. The law of man's creation was not obeyed. The original, and true, historic germ was crowded out, by a second false one. The first potential basis of human history, which provided for a purer progress, and a grander evolution, than man now can conceive of, was dis-

placed by a second basis, which likewise provided for a false development, and an awful history, if not supernaturally hindered, all along through the same endless duration.

The origination of moral evil by the self-will of man, consequently, brings to view another aspect of the idea of development, and a different application of the doctrine of genetic evolution. This stubborn fact compels the speculating mind to acknowledge, what it is prone to lose sight of, viz: that so far as the abstract definition is concerned, development may be synonymous with corruption, and decline, as well as with improvement; that the organic sequences of history may be those of decay, and death, as well as those of bloom, and life. For it displays, for his examination, another sort of germ, besides that one created by the Creator, and which He pronounced "good." It shows him a very different potentiality, from that original moral perfection with which humanity was once endowed. It enables him to understand something of the meaning of free-will, and, yet more, something of the mystery of self-will. For that misapprehension of the abstract idea of development, whereby it is contracted down from its wide universality of meaning, and applicability to all organic processes whatsoever, and limited to the single particular pro-

cess of improvement, arises from overlooking the functions and operations of free agency, which play such a part in the history of Man, and introduce such changes and varieties into it. The philosopher, at this point, as at many others, needs the instruction of the theologian. He needs to be reminded by his scientific co-laborer, that the moral power of self-determination causes alterations, and catastrophes, within the moral world, such as never appear in the world of material nature, and hence that when the theorist comes into this sphere, he must not be surprised if he finds archetypes departed from, and glorious ideals unrealized. Theology reminds philosophy of the fact, that although the natural and secular man is *mentally* rational, he is not *morally* so; that though the eternal truths of right, have been inlaid in his reason, by the act of his Creator, they have been expelled from his will, by an act of his own. The theorist, contemplating man's mental constitution, finds him to be possessed of all the truths of reason. These truths are necessary, and, in their own nature, entitled to an universal dominion. Hence he hastily concludes, that they must, of themselves, prevail in the history of any being, in whose very mental structure they are so thoroughly inwoven. The speculative maxim, "truth is mighty, and must prevail,"

carries him to the practical conclusion, "a rational being must inevitably act out his rationality, and be rational in all respects." But the theorist forgets, that the realization of a truth, in life and conduct, can go forth only from the active, and emotive, side of man. The heart and will, are the vitality of the human soul, and, hence, the proper seat of growth and evolution within it.* We have already, by a rigorous definition, evinced, that a process of development, is an organic, and consequently a thoroughly vital, one. Of whichever species it may be; be it growth in perfection, or growth in corruption, be it a living life, or a living death; as a connected and organic process, it must go on in the faculties of feeling and will, or not at all. Development, be it true or false, is the result of an *active* principle. If, therefore, the truths of reason and righteousness are not wrought into this part of the man, it matters not how thoroughly they may have been elaborated, by the Creator's act, into

* It is a maxim of the lynx-eyed Aristotle, that "mere intellect moves nothing;" *διανοία δ' αὐτὴ οὐδὲν κινεῖ*. Ethics, vi. 5.

That radical movement and transformation must proceed from the practical, in distinction from the theoretic, side of human nature, is the teaching of this whole paragraph, as well as of others, in this system of ethics. The theological doctrine, that no real moral change can be brought about in humanity, but by the renewal of the *will*, will suggest itself to the reader in this connection.

the *stationary* intellectual part of him. For there can be no flexible expansion of a truth of reason or revelation, unless it has been assimilated, and absorbed, into the moral and voluntary nature of man. Remaining in its rigid intellectual form, in the pure theoretic reason of man, a doctrine of natural, or of revealed, religion, has no more power of pliantly unfolding into feeling and conduct, than a stone has of turning into vegetable matter, merely because it has been caught, and held, in the fork of a rapidly growing tree. The error of the theorist, who argues from the ideal to the real, and affirms the necessary normal development of human nature, merely because it contains within itself the rule and law by which it *ought* to unfold; this error, of regarding development as the synonyme of improvement, arises from overlooking the difference between the legislative and the executive, the constitutive and the voluntary, the mental and the moral. A very considerable degree of moral *light* may exist, without the least degree of moral *life*. The rise of a respectable system of natural theology in pagan Greece and Rome, is no more a proof of a normal, or even an improving, evolution of human nature in that age and clime, than the clearest convictions of reason, and the most poignant reproaches of conscience, in an individual, are proofs that his in-

ward moral life is heavenly and heaven-ward. Indeed, it is only a very loose, and inadequate, apprehension of the idea of development, that can find in that wholly *speculative* movement of the ancient philosophic mind, and which, moreover, even in this form, was confined to a very few of the more thoughtful sages, and never exerted any influence upon the individual and social life of the Greek and Roman populations; it is, we say, a very meagre and narrow conception of a very pregnant and fertile idea, that can find, in such a restricted phenomenon, the characteristics of a great diffusive organic process, which moulds human society internally, and from the centre. Can any candid mind say, that that "moral philosophy," which, as Bacon says, "was the heathen divinity," sustained the same inward relation to heathendom, that Christianity does to Christendom; that the system of Socrates was the principle of moral life for any portion of antiquity, as the system of Christ has been for the church in all ages? On the contrary, was not the truth, as St. Paul affirms, held down in unrighteousness, and was not the actual spontaneous development of the old world, as contrary to the doctrines of *natural*, as of revealed, religion?

And, so far as the individual examples of pagan virtue are concerned, we are willing to leave the de-

cision of the question, to themselves, whether the natural religion, which they apprehended in their reason and conscience, had so passed into their affections and will, and had such a vital control over their heart and character, as to constitute a normal development of human nature in their case. Read Plato, and find as full a confession, prompted by a personal consciousness, of the corruption and degeneracy of human nature, as ever came from uninstructed lips. Ask the wisest of heathen, if the principles of reason and righteousness, which lay in such clear outline before his mind's eye, constituted the life of his soul; and hear the answer, that however it may have been with him in a pre-existence of which he dreamed, and however it might be with him in a future world of which he knew nothing with certainty, the existing inward life, the present character, and the actual on-going development, was certainly contrary to the Beautiful, the True, and the Good.

The result, then, of the investigation in this lecture, is the further distinction of the idea of development from that of improvement, and the definition of Secular History as an abnormal but organic process. We had previously distinguished it from creation, and, now, this second limitation brings us round to an exhaustive definition of an idea which is probably

more potent, than any other, in forming and fixing the intellectual methods of the present generation of educated men. The history of the word is instructive. The loose, and unscientific, use of this single term, has done as much as any other single cause, to introduce error into current theories of nature, of man, and of human history. The remedy is not to be found in the rejection of either the conception or the term, but in a rigorous and scientific treatment of the idea itself, by which it is made to yield up its true and exact meaning; whereby it shall be fitted to apply equally to Heavenly and to Profane History, to pure and to corrupt evolutions, to organic processes of bloom and beauty and perfection, and to organic processes of decline, decay, and ruin. The downward tendencies of human nature, which constitute the substance of Secular, as distinguished from Sacred, History; the acknowledged deterioration of languages, literatures, religions, arts, sciences, and civilizations; the slow and sure decay of national vigor, and return to barbarism; the unvarying decline, from public virtue to public voluptuousness; in short, the entire history of man, so far as he is outside of supernatural influences, and unaffected by the intervention of his original Creator, though it is a self-determined and responsible process, is yet, in every part and particle, as organically con-

nected, and as strict an evolution, as is that other upward tendency, started in the Christian Church, and ended in the eternal state, by which this same humanity is being restored to the heights whence it fell.

But while the course of development in Secular or Profane History, presupposes a potential basis from which it proceeds, the all-important fact must be noticed, and remembered, that this is a *secondary* basis, and not a primary one, and that the originating author is the *finite*, and not the infinite, will. Under and within the permissive decree of God, *sin is man's creation*; he makes it out of nothing. For the origin of moral evil cannot be accounted for, by the expansion of something already in existence, any more than the origin of matter can be. Original righteousness, unfolded never so long, and intensely, will never be transmuted into original sin. The passage, from one to the other, must be by an absolutely originant act of self-will, which act, subject only to the limitation and condition, above-mentioned, of the permission of the Supreme Being, is strictly creative from nothing. The origin of sin, is the origination of a new historic germ, and not the unfolding, or modification, of an old one, and hence the necessity of a creating, in distinction from a developing, energy; such as is denoted by

the *possibilitas peccandi* attributed by the theologian to the will of the unfallen Adam. Supposing, then, the beginning of moral evil to be carefully referred to the abuse of human freedom, and keeping the process of its evolution within the same sphere of self-will in which it took its first start, we may then say, that it undergoes a development, as truly as any thing else that belongs to the history of man. If any one doubts whether this term, so often applied only in a good sense, as to be for the popular mind the synonyme of normal progress, is properly applicable to a process like that of human sinfulness, he needs only to try this process by the tests that are discriminated in the metaphysical analysis of the conception. He will find that the corruption of humanity has been as organic a sequence, from an original centre, as is to be found either in the realm of Nature or of Spirit; that it exhibits all the characteristics of an evolution; the necessary and natural connection of elements and properties, their action and reaction, the sameness of generic principle in all the individual varieties, and the unceasing motion of a constant expansion.

The same rigorous application of the doctrine of development, moreover, compels us to the further position, that the *reversal* of this illegitimate, and false, process which is going on in humanity, also necessi-

tates a creative power. For no process of mere, and strict, evolution can go behind itself, and alter the base from which it proceeds. *Radical* changes cannot be produced in this manner. There must be an *originant* energy, in order to these. The passage from holiness to sin, we have already noticed, cannot be accounted for by the doctrine of development, and neither can the passage from sin to holiness be explained by the theory of education. The expulsion of a false germ, and the re-introduction of the true one, must, therefore, be accomplished by an agency that is creative, in distinction from one that is merely expansive. An organic process is, by its very nature and definition, self-perpetuating, until an agency, specifically different from its own, interferes. A germ of one kind cannot originate a germ of a different one, and consequently there is no *natural* and *germinant* passage, from an illegitimate to a legitimate potentiality in human history, any more than there is from a vegetable to an animal species. The passage, if there be one, must be *supernatural*; i. e. the work of a creative, in distinction from an educating, agency, and by an instantaneous act, in distinction from a gradual process.

Secular history is therefore separated from Sacred, by a chasm over which it cannot pass, except by the

intervention of the Creator.* The abuse of human freedom, allows of no self-remedy. The Christian Religion, and the new historic process resting upon it, cannot, from the very nature of the case, and the

* The query may arise in this connection, whether this creative energy may not be in the fallen finite will itself, and thus there be no absolute necessity of the intervention of the infinite Spirit, and employment of special Divine efficiency. If the human will was possessed, before its defection from Law, of a power to create moral evil, why is it not possessed, since its fall, of a power to create moral good? The objections to this are the following. (1) The affirmation of such a power rests, solely, upon an *a priori* foundation. There is no *a posteriori* test, and verification, that corroborates it. Fallen man is not conscious of such an originant energy to good, though he is at times conscious of its lack; and that he never exerted it, is a well-established fact. This power then to originate, in distinction from develop and cultivate, holiness, if attributed to the sinful will at all, must be attributed upon other grounds than psychological and practical ones. But metaphysics unsupported by psychology, we have seen, must be conjectural merely, and consequently of a spurious order. An abstract theory, which is destitute of its concrete correspondent in the world of actual experience, like the Alchemists' hypothesis of occult qualities, is destitute of scientific value. Science demands a matching of the one half, with its other half; of the *a priori*, with the *a posteriori*. If such be the real relation of these two intellectual methods to each other, it follows that a position, like the one in question, which can get its support from only one of them, and this, the least practical of the two, should be rejected. (2) But in the second place, even if the position in question be held as a pure abstraction, by a dead lift of the intellect, and without any experimental corroboration, it then follows from it, that the finite will

very terms of the statement, be an evolution of the apostate man. To affirm this, would be to confound development with creation. A clear and distinct conception, consequently, of the nature of Secular History, guides the mind inevitably to the doctrine, and fact, of Revelation, if a radical change is to be intro-

can be the absolute, and sole, author of holiness, as it is of sin, and that, consequently, it can establish for itself an absolute meritoriousness before God, as it can and has an absolute guiltiness. It confessedly has the power of creating moral evil out of nothing, without the influence and co-operation of the Divine Spirit, so that its demerit is absolute, and its damnation eternal, in case it uses this power; and if it is capable of originating moral good, in the same unassisted manner, then a correspondent absoluteness of merit would be established upon this side. But no finite will, not even that of the unfallen angels, can take the total merit of holiness to itself, as the fallen will must take the total demerit of sinfulness. It is only on the side of moral evil, that the will of the creature can act without influence and assistance from the Creator, because it is only on this side, that it can act in opposition to Him. — While, therefore, man by the permission of the Supreme, and not without it, can abuse his free agency, and establish a self-derived, and therefore absolute, criminality, he can never, by the use of free agency, establish a self-derived, and therefore absolute, worthiness. If then, the very relationship of all moral good to the Holy Spirit, is that of dependence, to such a degree that the doctrine of its absolute origination, or creation from nothing, is inapplicable even to the unfallen finite spirit, much more must this doctrine be excluded, in the instance of the apostate will. The theory of a strictly originant energy in the soul of man, can, consequently, apply only to moral evil.

duced. No new order of history can possibly begin, if the existing movement and expansion are simply left to themselves. An absolutely originant and creative power must be called in, to reverse the process, and give it an upward instead of a downward, direction.

LECTURE III.

THE NATURE, AND DEFINITION, OF CHURCH HISTORY.

In explaining and applying the idea of development, we have arrived at the nature of History in the abstract, and of that specific concrete form which is denominated Profane, or Secular. We have now to make a third application of the idea to the history of Christianity.

Church History we define to be, the restoring of the true development of the human spirit, by the supernatural agency of its Creator. The doctrine of evolution is now to be applied to that gradual process of recovery from the apostasy of his will, which regenerated man is passing through, here on earth, as a member of the spiritual kingdom of Christ. We shall find this to be a series, and sequence, as organic as any that have passed before our review, or that we can conceive of. The founder of Christianity Himself, so describes it, when He says that "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown it is the

greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof;" when He says, again, that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."* In these parables, two of the most thorough and inward processes in nature, viz: those of germination and fermentation, are chosen by our Lord to indicate the real nature of his religion. And no one can study the illustrations, which He so frequently employs, in order to give a clear conception of his religion as it works in the individual soul, and in the world at large, without being convinced that it is, in its own sphere and kind, as much of the nature of a living principle, as the breath of life in the nostrils. — For these illustrations are almost entirely drawn from the world of animated nature, and thereby evince that the Author of nature and of grace knows, that the vitality of the one best symbolizes and explains the vitality of the other.

But if it was of the first importance, in the previous lectures, to direct attention to the fact, that the power which originates the basis of any living process is a creative one, it is certainly so in the present instance. This free, and fresh, unfolding of the Christian life, in

* Matthew XIII. 31—33.

the midst of the declining processes of Secular History, as was indicated in the close of the last lecture, cannot be accounted for, by any germs or forces lying undeveloped in the heart of the secular man. Mere expansion, forever and forevermore, would only display a more thoroughly intense, and concentrated, corruption of human nature. We are, consequently, once more driven to the Supernatural and Divine, if any radical change in humanity, and any new species of history, is to be introduced. As Secular History is the unfolding of the fallen nature of man, left to its own spontaneity, so Sacred History is the development of his regenerated nature, under the continued influence of the power that first, and instantaneously, effected the change. The first question, consequently, that is to be answered here, relates to this power itself. What, then, is that supernatural Power, which begins, carries forward, and perfects, that new process of development in human nature, which constitutes the sum and substance of Church History? In answering this question, we necessarily describe, by implication, the nature of this species, and obtain a clue to the whole process itself.

Speaking generally, the power which begins, perpetuates, and completes, the restoration of the true unfolding of humanity, is *Divine Revelation*. The

term is taken in its most comprehensive meaning, to denote the entire *special* communication which God has made to man. In this generic form, it subdivides into two main branches; (1) The revelation of Truth : (2) The dispensation of the Spirit.

From the fall in Eden, down to the death of the last of the Apostles, God, through the medium of inspiration, at sundry times and in divers manners, has imparted to the mind of man a body of knowledge, the purpose of which is to enlighten his darkened understanding respecting his origin, fall, actual character, religious necessities and the divine method of meeting them. This revealed truth has been preserved by special Providence, and is now, an outward, fixed, written revelation. .

Again, parallel with this species of Divine communication, another has been made, viz : a dispensation of direct spiritual influence. The purpose of this second form of the Divine manifestation, is to renew and sanctify the human soul. The function of the first, is to enlighten, as that of the second, is to enliven. These two forms of God's supernatural self-revelation are co-ordinate, and necessary to each other's success ; and hence the dispensation of spiritual influence has accompanied that of truth, in all ages of the Church from the very beginning. For although the degree

and extent of this influence, was greatly augmented after the ascension of Christ, yet it would be as incorrect to affirm that the kind, the fact itself of direct divine efficiency upon the human soul, did not exist in the Patriarchal and Jewish churches, as it would to assert that there was no revelation of truth from God, previous to the New Testament economy, because the disclosures of this latter were so much fuller than those of its antecedent.

Revelation, then, in this generic sense, is a unity and a continuity. So far as it is a communication of Truth, it began with the promise in Eden, and ended with the glowing invitation of the beloved disciple of the Incarnate Word, who was also the Jehovah of the Patriarchs and Prophets, addressed to all men without distinction, to take the water of life freely. So far as it is a communication of the Spirit, it commenced with the regeneration of the fallen pair, and has continued, through all ages, to be the efficient agency in applying the written revelation. Unlike the communication of the Word, that of the Spirit must continue to the end of the world; and yet the permanent co-ordination, and mutual necessity, of each, will be seen in the fact, that the finished revelation of Truth, the concluded canon of Scripture, will be employed to the end of time, by the Holy Ghost,

as his own, and only, instrument of human renovation.

We have, then, in this total, generic, *Revelation from God*, the originant power in Church History. — The foundation of Secular History, is the human mind and human power, under the merely ordinary, maintaining, agency of Divine Providence; that of Sacred History, is the Divine mind and Divine power, exerting themselves with an extraordinary and creative energy. Supernatural communication from the Deity, is the great objective force in this species of human history; the foundation and principle of the restored normal development of humanity. This revelation of Himself on the part of God, entering into the midst and mass of mankind, selects out a portion by a sovereign act,* regenerates, and moulds, it into a body by itself, separate from the world though existing in it. This body is therefore as truly organized, and

* The fall of man is generic, and hence all men are fallen; the redemption of man is individual, and electing, and consequently only a portion are saved. A catastrophe, like spiritual apostasy, occurring at a point in human history when humanity was a unit, and a unity, affects the whole, indiscriminately, and without exception; but when man has passed out of this form of existence, into that of a series, and succession, of individuals, it is plain that the principle of individualism must govern his restoration, and that redemption, consequently, cannot be generic and universal.

organic, as that still larger body which is denominated the race, or that still smaller body which is denominated the state. It exhibits a process possessing all the properties of an expanding germ, and has a history which is vitally connected, and reciprocally related, from beginning to end.

We pass, now, to consider the characteristics of this process of restoring the true development of human nature, in order to obtain a yet fuller apprehension of the distinctive peculiarities of Church History.

1. Observe, first, that the development of regenerate man, here upon earth, is only imperfectly normal. It differs from what it would have been, had human nature unfolded from the original germ, without any fall, or deviation from the prescribed career, by exhibiting a mixture of true and false elements. The church on earth, is not perfect. Its career contains sections of corruption, decay, decline; characteristics that cannot belong to a perfect process; elements that do not belong to Church History in its narrower sense, of denoting only what ought to be the process, considering the perfection of the germ from which it proceeds. For inasmuch as the potential basis, in this instance, is the perfect Revelation of God, the development that proceeds should upon abstract principles be an entirely

perfect one also. Since the inward life is supernatural and divine, the manifestation ought to be so likewise, and entirely unmixed with foreign and false elements.

But the actual history of the Church, does not thus exactly conform to this its ideal. It only approximates to it, and hence the restoring of the true development of humanity, is not that pure and spotless process, which the history of man was originally intended to exhibit, and which it would have presented, had the first divinely designed unfolding taken place. The history of the Christian Church, though vastly different from that of the secular world, though different in kind from it, is by no means that perfectly serene and beautiful evolution which is going on in the heavenly world.

Church History, consequently, as we actually find it, exhibits a complex appearance, a double movement. It is both the expansion of a true, and the destruction of a false, evolution. As, in the instance of the individual Christian, the career consists of a double activity, the living unto righteousness and the dying unto sin, so in the instance of the Church, the entire history consists of the growth of the spiritual and holy, and the resistance of the natural and sinful. The fight between the flesh and the spirit, in the sin-

gle believer, is both a part, and a symbol, of that great contest between two opposing principles, which constitutes the charm of Church History, and renders it, for the contemplative mind, by far the most interesting, as it is the most important, part of the Universal History of man on the globe.

Hence, although we pass into the sphere of the Supernatural, into the midst of supernatural ideas, germs, and forces, on passing from Secular to Sacred History, we yet by no means go into a world of calm. We enter a world of thicker moral storm, and of hotter mental conflict, than is to be found in any section, or in the whole range, of Secular History. But there is this great difference: the storm is destined to become an eternal calm, and the conflict to end in an eternal triumph. This complexity, in the process, is destined to become a simple unity, and this antagonism a perfect harmony. The dualism, in the now imperfectly normal history, is ultimately to vanish, and God is to be all in all. But so long as the church is militant, and until it enters upon its eternal heavenly career, it cannot exhibit that unmixed, and pure, process of holy life and growth, which the history of man was originally intended to be. The secondary restoring of a normal development is not, like the primary unfolding, a tranquil and unhindered process; and this

is the difference between the history of an unfallen, and that of a regenerate, spirit.

2. Notice, in the second place, that the development in Church History is not symmetrical. We see the same lack of entire harmony, in the life of the church, that we do in that of the individual believer. No christian biography exhibits a perfect proportion in the features of the religious character, or a perfect blending of all the elements of the christian experience. The man is either too contemplative, or too practical, too vehement, or too tranquil. There is but one individual religious life, that is completely symmetrical, and that is the life of the Divine founder, and exemplar, of Christianity. There are, indeed, different degrees of approximation to this ideal symmetry. Some characters are much more proportionate, and beautiful, than others, but there is not a single one of them all, that is so exactly conformed to the Divine model, as to be an exact reproduction of it. Ullmann speaks of a point in religion, beyond which any further improvement is, not only impossible but, inconceivable. He describes it, as being that completed oneness of the human soul with God, in which the former is determined in all its movements, and moulded in all its experiences, by the latter, and yet feels that this determination, and moulding by the

Divine, is no pantheistic absorption, nor external compulsion, but its own most free, and personal, self-determination, and self-formation.* But no christian biography discloses such a perfect christian consciousness as this. The holiest saints on earth complain of inward conflict and an interest separate from God, mourn over a part of their experience, as that of indwelling sin, and confess, that even on the holy side, there is too much that is ill-balanced, and disproportionate. Not one of them can apply to himself, in their highest unqualified sense, these words of St. Paul, "I live, and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Not one of them has been a perfect representative, in his earthly life, as he will be in his heavenly, of the symmetrical holiness of Jesus Christ. Precisely the same is seen in the larger sphere of the Church; for the individual life is the miniature of the general, the microcosm mirrors the macrocosm. As we trace the historic development along down the ages and generations of believers, we find the same, greater or less, appoximation to symmetry, but never absolute proportion.

If we look at the history of Christianity upon its practical side, we find it an imperfectly symmetrical

* Studien und Kritiken, 1840. p. 48.

process. There are indications in the Apostolic epistles, themselves, that the gushing love, and glowing zeal, of the Apostolic church, sometimes passed over into an extreme, that injured the experience. The strong side of the character of the early Christians is their vivid life and feeling, and not a discriminating knowledge of the christian system, or of human nature at large. They apprehended truth chiefly in the way of feeling and experience, and expected to find their own warm affection for it, in every one who professed discipleship. Hence their liability to be deceived by false teachers, and their readiness to be led astray by false doctrine; traits to which the Apostolic epistles often allude, and against which they seek to guard, by a more thorough instruction of this glowing love, and cautious guidance of this ardent zeal. Paul, speaking to the Roman church of those who by good words and fair speeches would deceive the hearts of the simple, (*ακακων*, the artless and guileless good), adds, "I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil."* In writing to the Corinthian church, he enjoins it upon them not to be children in understanding; in malice they might be children, utterly unacquainted with any such thing, but in un-

* Romans, xvi. 18, 19.

derstanding they must be men.* The frequent warnings, against false teachers and doctrine, in the epistles of John, we need not specify. So liable was the guileless simplicity, and pure love, of the Apostolic church, to be imposed upon; so defective was this first form of the christian experience, on the side of knowledge; that the Head of the church, made up for the deficiency, and protected his people by a special Charism, or miraculous gift, viz: the power of discerning spirits, of reading the inward and real character of pretended teachers of Christianity.

When we pass from this first age, to a succeeding one, like that between Constantine and Hildebrand, or, still more, like that between Hildebrand and the Reformation, we find the christian character defective in just the opposite respect. Speaking comparatively, as we always must when comparing historic periods with each other, we may say, that the simplicity and love have been lost in the extreme of knowledge and discrimination. The adoption of Christianity by the temporal power, secularized it, and while the first Christians were too ignorant of men and things, the Grecian-Roman, and the Roman-Catholic, church knew them too well, for the guile-

* 1 Corinthians, xiv. 20.

lessness and simple love of a symmetrical christian character. They obeyed the first half of our Lord's injunction, but not the last. They were wise as serpents, but were not harmless as doves.

If again we look at the historical development of Christianity, on the theoretic side, as a system of doctrines, we find the same defect in the process. — Some ages undervalue knowledge altogether, and exhibit little or no scientific interest of any kind. — Others are almost exclusively speculative. It is as impossible to find an age, as it is an individual, in whom *γνωσις* and *πίστις*, light and life, knowledge and feeling, are mingled in exact proportions. Hence the whole series of periods and ages, contains more of the lineaments of a perfect symmetry, than any single one of them does, and the full idea of Christianity approximates nearer to a full embodiment, in the Church Universal, than in any particular branch of it.

This, therefore, is a proper place to allude to the error, of selecting some one ecclesiastical period, as the model for all time, and some one church, as the ideal for all churches. It is a false view of history, that would set up the church of the two centuries preceding, and the two centuries following, the Nicene council, as that one particular section, by which the church of the present, and the future,

should form itself. The attempt of the Oxford party, in the English church, to revive Nicene Christianity, as the normal type, was utterly unhistoric as well as irrational. That period undoubtedly had its excellences, and just as undoubtedly its defects. Its Christianity lacked a perfect symmetry. It can, therefore, furnish only some features that are to be imitated, and perpetuated, by the church of the present, and the church of the future. Its determined opposition to heretical conceptions, and its comparatively vigorous missionary spirit, are two characteristics of this period that deserve to be reproduced in all coming time. — The church, in this pantheistic and rationalistic age, should keep fast hold, of those statements of the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the Person of Christ, which had their origin in this period. The church, in this, and in every age, should retain the substance of those profound anthropological views, which were the result of the great controversy between Augustine and Pelagius. But surely no mind, that has any just conception of the spiritual nature of Christianity, can desire that such views of prelacy and primacy, of celibacy and monasticism, of the efficacy of the sacraments in connection with the meritoriousness of good works, as prevailed in this patristic period, should be recommended to the church, in all time, for servile

reception. He who follows the history of the Christian Religion, from its beginning down to the present, will not go to the Nicene period, for the most accurate statement of the doctrine of justification by faith, or for the most scriptural conceptions of the nature of christian virtue, and of ecclesiastical polity. He knows of other periods, whose more special and successful function, it was, to unfold these latter doctrines, as it was that of the Nicene period, to construct the doctrines of Theology and Christology.

As really, though not equally, is it an error to set up the Apostolic church, as the model for all time. — That brotherly affection, and that tender yet deathless love towards the Redeemer, must be a model for all ages, and will probably never be excelled by any generation of Christians. But the conflict which Christianity has to wage with a cultivated skepticism, and a subtle heresy, and that prudent discrimination which is needed, in some emergencies, to protect the earthly interests of the church, call for a development of Christianity in an intellectual and scientific direction of which we see little or nothing in the Apostolic brotherhood.* The primitive Christians were, in reality, the pupils and children of the apostles, who

* This Church might say, in reference to scientific statements of the doctrines of Scripture, as the unlettered woman spoken of in Chalmers'

answered all their questions, relieved all their doubts, and fought all their intellectual conflicts for them. But the apostles were an order of men which has not been perpetuated, to be the guardians and instructors of the church in every emergency. Their writings are left, it is true, but how often would even the didactic and thoughtful theologian, or the learned but perplexed council or assembly, after all its diligent study of these writings, have gladly betaken themselves, like the church at Corinth or Rome when in difficulty, to the inspired mind of a living apostle, for a further communication specially adapted to the case in hand. This age of pupilage could not continue, and therefore it cannot be set forth, any more than any other one, as the model to which all after ages are to be conformed in every respect.

In short, the student of the whole course of historical development will seek to make up for the want of that symmetry which is not to be found in any one section, by combining excellences that are found in each, and rejecting the defects that are found in all. For only in the career of the church as a whole, does he find the nearest approximation to

memoirs, did, when asked some theological questions respecting the person of the Redeemer, on her examination for admission to the church; "I cannot describe him, but I would die for him."

that church "without spot or wrinkle," spoken of in Scripture, and of which Divine Revelation is the originating power and perfecting principle.

3. Notice, in the third place, that the development in Church History is not uniform in every part.

This duplicity in the restoring process, of which we have spoken, hinders the movement. If there were only a single divine principle, and no remainders of a sinful human one, in the regenerated soul, the entire career of the christian church, would be one uninterrupted onward motion, one continual triumph of truth on the earth. But the religious life is enfeebled, and diminished, by the carnal and secular, in both the individual, and the church. In one age Christianity is vigorous, and its rapid extension into pagan regions is the consequence. A succeeding age presents the melancholy spectacle of decay and decline in these parent churches, and, perhaps, the beginning of the same process in the newly formed societies. Northern Africa from the second to the fifth century was the seat of a very vigorous religion, both in practical and speculative respects. Tertullian, Origen, and Augustine, represent a Christianity as influential as any that lies back of the Reformation. But these North African churches disappear from Christendom, with the suddenness of the lost Pleiad from the sky,

and, from the time of the Mohammedan invasion to the present, that whole region has no place in Church History. Such a phenomenon as this, cannot be accounted for by external causes. Terrible as the Saracen invasion was, a civilization and culture resting upon a sound and healthy Christianity, in Northern Africa, would have stopped, and beaten back, the Saracen, as instantaneously, and decisively, as he was by Charles Martel and his warlike Franks. History, secular as well as sacred, shows, that no form of heathenism, or of worldly power, can compete with a true and genuine Christendom. But an interior process, of decline and decay, had gone on in the very heart of these churches and this christian society. The moral and intellectual strength, had departed, along with the pure scriptural piety of the founders, and first witnesses, and the whole population fell an easy prey to the fanatic zeal of the Mohammedan. Instances like this throng upon the mind, but a single one is sufficient to show, that the external development of Christianity is constantly liable to interruption in parts and sections of the entire career. The same fact stares us in the face, if we look at its internal history. Compare the present condition of the Eastern church, with what it was, when it took the lead of the Western; when its Athanasius was the theologian, and its

golden-mouthed Chrysostom the orator, for all Christendom. If this church could, this day, be put back fifteen hundred years, it would be in advance of its present position. The development has been intermitted for this length of time, and will continue to be, until an infusion of fresh life, through the missionary efforts of Protestant churches and the Divine blessing upon them, occurs.

4. Notice, in the fourth place, as a sequence from these defects, in the development, which we have mentioned, that in ecclesiastical history we can affirm a normal progress only as we view the church as a whole. Truth and piety are unfolded in the long run of ages, though not necessarily in each and every one of them; in the general run of churches, though not necessarily in each and every one of them. — Though the process is hindered, turned aside, and temporarily stopped, by the corrupt free agency of man, it is yet, as a whole, under the guidance and protection of God, and therefore goes on; if not in this nation, and age, yet in another. We know, from the promise of the Author of Christianity, that his religion is destined to a far wider extension, among men, than has yet been seen; and upon this we must ultimately rest, in order to maintain a confident expectation that such will be the fact. Much is sometimes

said of the self-realizing power of Christianity, but unless we identify the system with its Author; unless we think of the Word and the Spirit of God, as one undivided agency; we cannot read certain chapters of Church History, with any firm belief, that even revealed truth will continue to expand with genial life within the hearts of men, and exert a continuous and mighty influence age after age. Take away from Christianity the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and the very life of the system disappears. Take away from Church History, the actual dispensation of spiritual influences, and the vitality of the process departs. And it is because the Holy Spirit has never left the church as a whole, while He has suspended his quickening influences in sections, that we can say with the strictest truth, that the progress of the great whole has been continuous, though sometimes interrupted in the parts.

5. Notice in the fifth place, that the development of a section or an age, in Church History, is often only the reproduction of some preceding type. When Christianity has declined, in a particular branch of the church, the reformation that takes place, is, really, only the restoration of a previous form of vital godliness. It is not, however, the mere copy of an antecedent period, containing no more and no less elements,

and in just the same proportions. History exhibits no *fac similes*. There is no copying in a living process, but there is reproduction, and a great amount of it. The Protestant Reformation was the revival of that genuine doctrine, and holy life, which had manifested itself once before in the church of the first five centuries. And yet, it was not a mere *fac simile* of it, because the corrupt elements, in doctrine and morals, which began to come in particularly after the union of Church and State under Constantine, were expelled by the newly awakened religious life. The feeling of guilt, moreover, was more keen and poignant, and the appropriation of atonement more intelligent and cordial, than in the patristic period. Still, it was in the true sense of the word, a re-production, and it called itself a *re*-formation. The aim of Luther was to restore a piety that had once before been the glory and strength of the Church, and not to invent any new style of christian life. Probably, in the outset, his desire was merely to make the Roman Catholic church what it was in the first three centuries, before the Romish bishop had become the Romish pope. And it was not until he saw, that the Romish Church of 1517 was radically different, in doctrine and in practice, from the Roman Church of 350, and radically different from that invisible church to which

he himself belonged, in common with the holy of all ages, that he understood the true relation of the invisible to the visible, and became the instrument in the hand of God of continuing the life of the church invisible, or the true Catholic church, under a new outward organization. The ecclesiastical progress which Luther desired for the age in which he lived, was a return to an age that lay more than a thousand years nearer the first promulgation and spread of Christianity.

If we turn to the theology of the Reformatory period, the same fact meets us. The two theologians of this age were Melancthon and Calvin. Examine the "Loci Communes" of the one, and the "Institutes" of the other, and see the substantial reproduction of an earlier theology. From the beginning to the end of the Institutes, in particular, there is a continual appeal to Augustine. Calvin, though of singularly strong and independent mind, and thoroughly convinced that the Scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and thoroughly acquainted with them through a most exhaustive exegesis, nevertheless uniformly cites the exegetical and systematic opinions of the Latin father as corroborative of his own. And the relation between the two systems, is not merely that of confirmation and cor-

roboration. So far as human influence was concerned, the one grew out of the other, and the other formed the one. Thus was it regarded as a progressive advance, by the leading spirits of the Reformation, to revive an antecedent form of faith and practice, and in the sixteenth century to return to the first five centuries.

Do we not in these facts find an incidental, but strong, corroboration of the position, that Church History is a process of organic development? Something more than mere chronological sequence, without action and reaction, is needed to account for such phenomena as we have been noticing. If the movement of Christianity in the world, were merely rectilinear, straight forward in one line, we ought to find each succeeding age possessed of all that the preceding had possessed, together with something more of its own. In this case, the last must be wisest and holiest of all. But such is not the movement. The motion is circular, and spiral, rather than straight onward. The process is organic, and not mechanic, or mathematical. The line returns into itself, so that, as in the old philosophy, it is the circle, and not the right line, that symbolizes the living process.

It is from this rectilinear rather than spiral conception, this mechanical rather than organic idea, of His-

tory, that the common fallacy arises, of supposing that each age, as matter of course, contains all the development of the past, merely because it happens to be chronologically last in the series. This error rests upon the assumption, that juxta-position and location determine everything in History, and that a man living in the nineteenth century is wiser of course than one living in the seventeenth, because nineteen are two more than seventeen. This would be the case, if History were not an organic process, in which, a part that has come into existence last in the order of time, is very often inferior and degenerate in point of quality. The latest blossoms are not always fruit blossoms. We have seen that in any organism whatever, the parts are reciprocally means and end. Each exists for all and all for each, so that no one part can be exalted to a supremacy over all the others. Hence, in History there is a continual inter-dependency. No one age is superior to all others. Some past periods, in the history of the church, have been in advance of the present in some particulars. The present is never in advance of all the past, in all respects. The age of the Reformation was in advance of the nineteenth century, in a profound and living apprehension of the doctrine of justification by faith. The best Soteriology is derived from the sixteenth century. The

creeds of the Reformers, in connection with the practical and theoretical writings by which they defended and explained them, have been the chief human instrument in forming the present Protestant theory of Redemption. The present age, on the other hand, has advanced greatly beyond the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in respect to the application of Christianity to the wants of the world, and the exercise of a practical missionary spirit. Thus, one age is the teacher of another, the pupil of a second, the stimulator of a third. In some way or another, each of the historic sections sustains a relation of action and reaction; and in and by this interagency, the total process of evolution goes forward. Looking at the parts, we find them deficient; looking at the whole, we find it approximately complete.

At this point, then, let us retrace our steps, and succinctly state the results to which we have come.

In the first division of the subject, we obtained the definition of Abstract History. We found it to be development in the abstract; a dynamic process merely, without any qualification, in which the connection of parts and elements is necessary, natural, and organic. This is the most general idea, and is capable of being applied to each and every particular species of history, be it in the domain of Nature or of Spirit.

But inasmuch as it is universal and abstract, it does not, of itself, determine the character and value of the process. It simply indicates that it is an evolution from a potential basis, but with the specific qualities of this, the abstract conception has no concern, and hence the doctrine of expansion is applicable, indifferently, to a latency that is good, or to a latency that is evil; to a germ originated by the Creator, or to a germ originated by the creature. This rigorously abstract conception of the idea, precludes that imperfect and narrow apprehension of it, which insists, either expressly or tacitly, that every germ is of necessity good, and that all development is an inevitable normal process.

In the second division of the subject, we have obtained a definition of Secular History. This we have found to be a particular species of development; that, viz: of a false germ. The common and profane history of man is an illegitimate process, but none the less an organic one, to which the doctrine of expansion applies with its fullest force. The difference between the actual and the ideal unfolding of humanity, relates not to the continuous nature of the processes themselves, but to the specific difference between their potential bases. The germ of the latter, is the creation of the infinite will, while that of the former, is the product of a finite faculty, in its fall from God.

In the third division of the subject we find a second concrete species of history; that of the Christian Church. The foundation of this, is laid by a supernatural power, which is strictly creative, and as such re-originates the lost principle of spiritual life in the apostate creature. From this germinal point, under the maintaining and educating energy of the same Divine power that established it, a new development of humanity commences, which gradually destroys and expels the relics of the false germ, and though hindered and imperfect in its stadia here below, runs its round, and becomes a perfect and serene evolution in eternity.

Neither one, of these two concrete processes, can be or become a potential basis for the other. Each can proceed only from its own germ. The origination of a false germ in the place of the expelled true one, and the restoration of the true one in the place of a dying false one, are, both of them, events that cannot be accounted for by the theory of development. There is no passage *in the way of expansion*, from one to the other basis.

LECTURE IV.

THE VERIFYING TEST IN CHURCH HISTORY.

HAVING now determined and applied the idea of development, and thereby come to an understanding of the nature of both abstract and concrete History, the second question mentioned in the first lecture, viz : how may we verify our *a priori* conception in any particular instance ? still remains to be answered. — This introduces to our notice, the general subject of tests in History. To follow out this subject into all its branches, would carry us far beyond the limits we have prescribed for ourselves, and we shall accordingly, as in a previous instance, confine the discussion chiefly to ecclesiastical history.

Lord Bacon, in the *Novum Organum*, teaches that “the sciences require a form of induction capable of explaining and separating experiments, and coming to a certain conclusion, by a proper series of rejections and exclusions.”* This “form of induction,” in other places he terms a “method,” or “clue,” by which the

* The distribution of the work.

mind is to be led through the bewildering multitude of phenomena and experiments, without being confused by their variety, and deceived by their contrariety.* By it he means that correct *a priori* conception of a thing, in the light of which, the inquirer is to detect all that properly belongs to it, and to reject all that does not. The reader of Bacon is struck with the frequency with which he speaks of "rejections," and "exclusions," in the investigation of nature. He everywhere assumes that there is a complexity, a mixture, and to some extent a contrariety, in this domain, that renders some foregoing tests necessary, in order that the true materials for science may be discriminated from the false. It is not enough to employ the senses in a merely passive manner, and see all that is visible, and accept all that is offered; to allow the stream of facts and appearances to flow along by the mind, and simply describe what has passed. Bacon's phraseology often implies an inducing of the mind into the senses; an introducing, into this complex aggregate of sensational materials, of a *mental* or

* "We must guide our steps by a clue, and the whole path, from the very first perception of our senses, must be secured by a determined method." Preface to the *Novum Organum*.

"Nothing can be known, without a determined order or method." The distribution of the work.

rational principle, that is to simplify and organize; in short, an induction of a method or an idea inwards, as well as a deduction of particular conclusions outwards.* Opposed as this sagacious and thoroughly English mind was, to the unverified and mere conjectures of the fancy, such as the alchemists, e. g., employed in investigating nature, he was not opposed to the initiating ideas, and pre-conceived methods, of the contemplative scientific mind. The fictions of occult qualities, and hidden spirits, he rejected, but his own map of the great kingdom of nature, with his full list of *a priori* tests and capital experiments, to guide the inquirer through a region which he has not yet travelled over, and in which Bacon himself had entered only here and there by actual experiment and observation; this example of Bacon, shows that he regarded the sober and watchful employment of the *a priori* method, by the scientific mind, to be not only legitimate but necessary.†

* "The form of induction of which the logicians speak, *which proceeds from bare enumeration*, is puerile, and its conclusions precarious." The distribution of the work.

"The logicians are contented with the immediate information of the senses." The distribution etc.

"Our method is that operation of the mind which follows close (i. e., servilely) upon the senses." Preface to *Novum Organum*.

† See his "*Sylva Sylvarum*," and "Preparation for a natural and experimental history."

Such a "form of induction" is needed in history, in order that the investigator may make the requisite detections, adoptions, rejections, and exclusions. For this science is not a miscellany of all that has happened. The historic spirit is not an indiscriminating one. The historian needs to reject as well as to accept; to distinguish the normal from the false development; to detect the element of error in the mass of truth, or the element of truth in the mass of error. It is not enough merely to daguerreotype an age; to simply hold up a mirror that passively reflects all that occurred. This is the Chronicle, but not the History. It is an exceedingly interesting and dramatic manner of representing the past, and furnishes the materials for the proper history. All true history has found its stuff in this minute, and passive, representation of the chronicle. Grecian history took its beginning in that body of narrative poems and legends, which extends from Homer to Herodotus, and though this latter is styled the father of Grecian history, yet the student feels, on passing from that easy and childlike credulity which records everything with equal seriousness, to the searching and philosophic criticism of Thucydides, that with the latter the history, as distinguished from the chronicles, of Greece begins. Roman history springs out of the legends of the monarchical

period, and such annals as those of Fabius Pictor, and, we must add, such narrative as that of Livy. English history derives its matter from the prose and metrical chronicles of the monks from 600 to 1300. Now if it were the great aim of the historian, to merely depicture the past exactly as it was upon its surface; to place the reader in the process as an actor, and not above it as a judge; certainly the chronicle would be the true and highest form of historic narrative. Read the chronicles of Froissart, and see with what minute fidelity everything is related, and with what dramatic vividness, and interest, the scenes of pacific and of war-like life are made to pass before the mind. But why are we unsatisfied with this account of the contest between France and England in those centuries, and why can we not accept it as history? It is because there is in the narrative none of that discriminating spirit, which is able to elevate the important and depress the unimportant; to let the causes of events, the ideas and forces of the period, stand out with bold prominence. Because in short, the chronicle teaches none of the lessons, and exhibits none of the philosophy, of history.

It is plain therefore that the historian must carry an idea, a method, in the phrase of Bacon, a "form of induction," into the world of human life, as well as

into the material world, if he would exhibit its deep meaning and significance. By this he will be able to distinguish the causes from the effects, and to present them in their proper proportions and relations to each other; to refer the phenomena to their grounds, and make the latter prominent above the former; to condense minor and unimportant matter and expand what is fundamental, and especially to detect and show what belongs to the process of true historic development, and what does not.

The position which we are endeavoring to establish has been very clearly and conclusively stated by one of the most profound of English writers, and we conclude this introductory part of the discussion by an extract from him. "A very common mode of investigating a subject," he says, "is to collect the facts and trace them downward to a general conclusion.— Now suppose the question is as to the true essence and character of the English Constitution. First, where will you begin your collection of facts? where will you end it? What facts will you select, and how do you know that the class of facts which you select are necessary terms, and that other classes of facts, which you neglect, are not necessary? And how do you distinguish phenomena which proceed from disease or accident, from those which are the

genuine fruits of the essence of the constitution? What can be more striking, in illustration of the utter inadequacy of this line of investigation for arriving at the real truth, than the political treatises and constitutional histories which we have in every library? A Whig proves his case convincingly to the reader who knows nothing beyond his author; then comes an old Tory (Carte, for instance), and ferrets up a hamperful of conflicting documents and notices which prove *his case per contra*. A. takes this class of facts; B. takes that class; each proves something true, neither proves *the* truth, or anything like *the* truth; that is, the whole truth.

We must, therefore, commence with the philosophic idea of the thing, the true nature of which we wish to find out and exhibit. We must carry our rule ready-made, if we wish to measure aright. If you ask me how I can know that this idea, my own invention and pre-conception, is the truth, by which the phenomena of history are to be explained, I answer, in the same way, exactly, that you know that your eyes were made to see with; and that is, because you *do* see with them. If I propose to you an idea, or self-realizing theory of the constitution, which shall manifest itself as an existence from the earliest times to the present; which shall comprehend within it *all* the

facts which history has preserved, and shall give them a meaning as interchangeably causes or effects, principles or phenomena ; if I show you that such an event or reign was an obliquity to the right hand, and how produced, and such other event or reign a deviation to the left, and whence originating, — that the growth was stopped here, accelerated there, — that such a tendency is, and always has been, corroborative, and such other tendency destructive, of the main progress of the idea towards realization ; if this idea of the English constitution, not only like a kaleidoscope, shall reduce all the miscellaneous fragments into order, but shall also minister strength, and knowledge, and light, to the true patriot and statesman, for working out the bright thought, and bringing the glorious embryo to a perfect birth ; — then, I think, I have a right to say that the idea which led to this is not only true, but the truth, and the only truth in the case. To set up for a philosophic historian upon the knowledge of facts only, is about as wise as to set up for a musician, by the purchase of some score of flutes, fiddles, and horns. In order to make music you must know how to play ; in order to make your facts speak truth, you must know what the truth is which *ought* to be proved ; the ideal truth ; the truth which was

consciously or unconsciously, strongly or weakly, wisely or blindly, *intended* at all times.*”

What then is the “form of induction” which we are to employ as our method or clue, to lead us through the mighty maze of materials in the history of the Christian Church? What is the antecedent idea, or self-verifying theory, with which we are to test and clarify the historical data in this department of inquiry, and how can we be certain that it is the true one? These are the questions now before us.

The brief and most general answer to them is, that the true idea of Christianity is the key to the history of the Christian Church, and this true idea is furnished by the Scriptures.

We have seen in a previous lecture, that the foundation of Sacred History is Divine Revelation; that the inmost life-power which restores the true development of humanity, and the inmost law which regulates the process, are the influences of the Divine Spirit allied with the doctrines of the Divine Word. If this is so, it follows that only revealed elements belong to the *true* history of the church, and that all that is anti-scriptural should be detected and eliminated. The test,

* Coleridge's Table Talk, (slightly altered). Works, vi. pp. 443-44.

consequently, which the inquirer is to apply to the complex, and, as we have seen, somewhat heterogeneous materials that meet him on all sides, is the test of the written revelation. We have seen that the process of restoring a lost normal development, is a dual one, because the expulsion of the relics of a false germ is going on contemporaneously. The history of the church is imperfectly normal, not entirely symmetrical, frequently interrupted, and nearer perfection as a whole than in sections. This would not be the case, if the infallible and perfect revelation of God had found a full realization of itself in the church. It follows consequently that this very revelation, itself, is to be used as the "form of induction," the antecedent norm or rule, by which conformity and agreement are to be indicated and approved, and by which deviations and contrariety are to be detected and rejected. In short, the student of Church history is to provide his mind with the Biblical idea of Christianity, and to use it rigorously, as the crucial test, while he examines the materials; while he examines the forms of polity and of worship, the varieties of orthodox and heretical doctrinal statement, the methods of defending Christianity, the modes of extending Christianity among unchristianized nations, the styles of life and morals, the

specimens of individual christian character. Through all this complex and perplexing mass of historical matter, the true Scriptural idea and theory of Christianity is to conduct the investigator, so that he may see the true meaning and worth of the facts and phenomena, and set a proper estimate upon each. That we may see the imperative need of some such guide, let us look at a single class of phenomena; a single series of facts. We find a polity, a church constitution, in all the ages of the Christian church. There is the Jewish church-constitution; then the exceedingly slight and almost invisible constitution of the Apostolic church of the first forty or fifty years after the death of Christ; then the more consolidated republicanism of the close of the first and the beginning of the second century; then the dim beginnings of the episcopate followed by the established primacy of the Roman bishop in the Western church, and of the Constantinopolitan bishop in the Eastern; then the absolute monarchy of the Romish pope, and the ecclesiastical despotism of the mediaeval polity; then, since the Reformation, the revival of all but the last of these forms of polity in the various branches of the Protestant church, together with the continuance of the Papacy and the Patriarchate.

Here, now, is a mass of conflicting facts and phe-

nomena, upon which it is necessary to form a truly historic judgment. It is not enough to take the position of the annalist and chronicler, and simply exhibit the facts, without any philosophic estimate of their intrinsic and relative value. Neither is it enough to give a vivid and dramatic picture of all these features, and parts, of the total process, and nothing more. The historian must set a proper estimate upon each and all, and deliver a judgment regarding them. He must say, and show, which of these forms of ecclesiastical polity is most congruous with the spiritual nature of Christianity. He must be able to say, and show, which of them deviates most from the general christian idea of church government, and which is positively contrary to it. He must be able to say, and show, which grew out of a false and corrupted apprehension of Christianity, and so tended to perpetuate the error in which it had its own birth.

But how can he say and show all this, in reference to this mass of historical facts and phenomena, and how can he say and show the same in reference to the whole entire mass of historical materials, if he has not, clear and bright in his own mind, the true idea and theory of Christianity itself; that Divine idea, which is to be seen struggling for realization through all this ocean of elements; that Divine theory, which

is being executed feebly in this section and powerfully in that, which is resisted in this age, and cherished in that, but which, in the entire sequence of ages and the whole sweep of years, is going on conquering and to conquer? And how is he to have this idea and theory clear and bright in his mind, leading it like the Beatrice of Dante, through the Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, of history, except as he derives it from the fixed and unchanging written revelation, in which it is distinctly enunciated and explained?

We say distinctly enunciated and explained; for notwithstanding the difficulty of interpreting certain portions of the scriptures, and the many controversies that have arisen within the church, respecting the real mind of the Spirit, the written revelation so plainly teaches one general system of religion, that its prominent and distinctive features are to be seen in each and all of the various forms of evangelical doctrine that have appeared in the Church Universal. Even when this general system is overloaded with human inventions and additions which positively contradict and nullify it, or tend to crush it to death by their materialism, there is sometimes enough of it still left to show that the original formers of a symbol were nearer the Biblical system than their successors, and found less difficulty in detecting in the Bible a com-

mon teaching and creed. The creed of the Papal church, though not evangelical upon the distinctively evangelical doctrine of justification by faith, is yet in advance of the present religious character and teaching of that body, because it still retains some of those scriptural elements that were incorporated into it in the better days of this church. And hence in modern times ; since the Protestant Reformation, and undoubtedly under the influence that has radiated from the scriptural faith, and purer practice of the Protestant churches ; men like Pascal, and parties like the Janse- nists, have endeavored to effect a reform within the Roman Catholic communion, by cutting off the excrescences of tradition, and letting the original scriptural stock, imperfect as it was, grow on by itself. All the attempts at reform within a corrupt Christianity like that of the Romish, and the Greek, church, are implied proofs, and tacit confessions, that the written revelation is clear and unambiguous in its general teachings. For there could be no endeavors to get back to a conformity with an original directory like the scriptures, unless it were believed that there is such an one, and that its directions are plain to the candid and truth-seeking mind. As matter of fact the symbols of the various churches, are nearer to each other than their theological tracts and treatises

are, because they are derived more immediately from scripture data: the Bible being not only a unity, but unifying in its influence.

Hence we say that the idea of Christianity, which the inquirer is to take with him into Church History, can be, and must be, derived from the scriptures themselves and alone. If it were a secular historic process, the preconceived idea need not necessarily be derived from a supernatural revelation. In the instance of the English Constitution, cited above, the investigator takes a purely human idea with him, as he follows the constitutional history of England down from age to age. This idea is no other than that organic law of the realm, of which jurists speak, and which is not to be referred to a specially supernatural source, but to the spontaneous operation of the natural reason of man. The same is true of all secular, as distinguished from sacred, history. The inquirer is not in the region of the Supernatural, and hence although the light that is thrown upon profane history by the Divine revelation is indispensable to seeing its deeper and more solemn significance, it is yet not the *sole* light in which it must be viewed.

But in Church History the light of revelation is the *sole* light by which to see, and the revealed idea and theory is the *sole* preconception by which the mind

of the inquirer is to be guided. He who reads the history of the church in the light of that Divine truth which lies at its foundation, will not read amiss. He who constructs the facts, and builds up the account, by the method and plan furnished by the written word, will rear the structure in its true proportions. — He who takes scriptural Christianity, as the “form of induction” by which the true elements are to be discovered, and wrought into the account, and the false elements are to be detected, and expelled from it; the “form of induction” by which the tests are to be applied to all the facts and phenomena, and the corresponding adoptions and rejections of good and bad materials are to be made; he who rigorously applies this scriptural idea, will investigate the history of the church in such a manner as to convey the real lessons which it teaches. All ecclesiastical history composed in such a manner will be catholic and exactly true. — It will not be made to serve the interests of any particular sect, for it will impartially, as do the scriptures themselves, expose all deviations from the truth of God, though within its own sphere, while it will faithfully report and depict all conformity to that truth, in whatever age or country it may be found.

And this brings to our notice, the necessary and
al connection between Church History and

Dogmatic Theology. The two sciences are reciprocally related, and mutually influence each other. — For this pre-conception, derived from the scriptures, of the nature of Christianity, whose leading Church History follows, is, for substance, that doctrinal system which the theological mind has formed by the scientific study of the written revelation. Notwithstanding all professions to the contrary, every writer of ecclesiastical history, as well as of secular, has his own standing point and view-point. This can be inferred from the spirit and teachings of his work, as unmistakably as the position of the draughtsman can be inferred from the perspective of his picture. Who can mistake the political, philosophical, and theological, ideas which Hume carried with him from the beginning to the end of his history of England? Would a whig theory in politics, a platonizing instead of a pyrrhonizing mental philosophy, and a christian instead of a deistic theology, have read the facts in the career of the English state and church as he has read them? Who cannot see the difference between the rationalistic and the supranaturalistic conception of the christian religion, as he reads the ecclesiastical histories of Semler and Henke on the one hand, and those of Mosheim and Neander on the other? In all ages the written history of Christianity is very greatly affected,

and modified, by the prevailing theological spirit and bent of the historian.

But on the other hand, dogmatic theology is greatly affected and modified by the history of the church. Creeds and systems that are formed without much knowledge of past symbolism, are apt to differ, sometimes in minor and sometimes in essential respects, from creeds and systems that breathe a historic spirit. Thus the relation, between the two sciences of theology and history, is not that of mere cause and effect, in which the activity is all on one side, and the passivity all on the other. It is rather an organic relation, of action and reaction, in which both are causes and both are effects, both are active agents and both are passive recipients.

But, in this connection, it is important to notice, that the Scriptures stand above both theology and history, as the infallible and unchanging rule by which both are to receive their ultimate formation. We assume, and believe we are correct in so doing, that the systematic theology which the christian mind has derived from the written word, agrees with the real teaching of this unerring source of religious truth. Still the scientific christian mind is not infallible, and it is possible for it to deviate from the matter of Scripture. Hence the need of a continual reference

and recurrence to revelation, on the part of dogmatic theology. Again, the experimental consciousness of these doctrines in the mental and moral life of the church, is not of necessity, and beyond all possibility of deviation, a perfect and normal experience. This historic christian life needs the guidance, and often the rectification, of the revealed canon. Neither dogmatic theology nor the historic movement of the christian mind can safely be left to themselves, without any protection from the written word. Even if each should be carried along for a time by its own momentum, upon the right line, the side influences of the remaining corruption and darkness of human nature would soon begin to draw it aside, and the deflection would soon be plain and great. The actual career of some branches of the church proves, that unless there is a constant recurrence to the written word, both in theoretical and practical theology, a corruption of both theory and practice is the natural result. Those who would substitute tradition and the voice of the church for the Scriptures, as well as those who would substitute the christian experience itself for them, commit the same error in common. The Romanist and the Mystic are really upon one and the same ground, and are equally exposed to that corruption of Christianity to which every human mind

is liable which does not place the Scriptures above both the teachings of history and the christian consciousness, whenever the question concerns an *ultimate* and *infallible* source of religious knowledge.

While, therefore, we believe that ecclesiastical history, both as it occurs and as it is written, is modified by the theology which prevails, and the theology which prevails is in turn modified by the knowledge of the past history of the church, we also believe, that the two cannot safely be left to their own inter-agency, and inter-penetration, unless both are all the time feeling the influences of the infallible revelation in which they both have their origin. Two streams may mix and mingle never so thoroughly, yet, unless the fountain is constantly pouring into them, their own mere motion cannot keep them pure, any more than it can keep their volume full. The idea of Christianity is therefore to be kept full, pure, and bright, in the head of the theologian and in the heart of the christian, by the written word, which has been preserved for the church, in order that, amid all the grades of knowledge and consequent varieties of experience that might arise within it, there might be a rule of faith and practice which, like its Author, should be without variableness or shadow of turning; because what is written is written.

By thus finding the Baconian "form of induction," or ultimate interpreting idea, for Church History, in the Scriptures solely, yet not refusing to employ the helps for understanding them afforded by the general theology, and the general religious experience, of the Church Universal, we avoid that fault which we regard as on the whole the most serious defect in Schleiermacher and his school; the fault, namely, of an undue subjectivity. For this school, the christian experience, or "consciousness," has a worth and importance in both dogmatic and historic constructions to which it is not entitled. In the reaction against the dead orthodoxy of the eighteenth century, they have practically undervalued the written objective revelation. We say practically, because in theory they thoroughly adopt the Protestant maxim that the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. Yet the student of a theological system like that of Schleiermacher, and a history like that of Neander, finds that the organization of the former and the construction of the latter, are actually determined more by an appeal to the living consciousness of the church than to the written word of God. The doctrinal development in the one representation, and the historical development in the other, is too much a self-determination of the christian mind and soul, with

too little reference to the correcting and regulating influence of that Divine truth in which all christian experience must find its norm. The historian does not exhibit with sufficient fullness, the influence which the inspired canon has exerted upon the unfolding of the christian life. The process of Sacred History is regarded, too much, as self-directed. Hence, the general undervaluation of strict dogmatic statements, as cramping the movement of the free christian spirit, the leniency towards certain heretical tendencies, and the occasional hesitating tone as well as vagueness of vision in respect to scientific orthodoxy, which characterize the best complete history of the christian religion and church that has yet been written.

What is needed is, more objectivity; more moulding by that fixed Object, that unchangeable Word, whose function it is to form the changing experience by its own fixedness and immutability. Consciousness cannot be an absolute and final norm for consciousness. It is the *object* of consciousness, by which the process of consciousness is to be shaped and determined. Inasmuch as that subjective process of faith and of feeling, which is seen in the christian church, owes its very existence to the objective revelation, so it must be kept pure from corruption and error by the

same, and be criticised and estimated by the same. To leave the process to test itself, and to protect itself from corruption, is not safe. An individual Christian who should trust to the feelings of even a regenerate heart, and the inward light of even a renewed mind, without continually comparing this subjective feeling and knowledge with the written word, would be the victim of a deteriorating, and, probably in the end, an irrational and fanatical experience. Much more then, is it unsafe to set up the christian experience, as the ultimate source of christian science and the final test of christian development, either in the particular or in the universal church.

Hence the Church historian must guard against two extremes. He must not, with the Rationalist, magnify the individual reason and the private judgment, to the disparagement of the general reason and judgment of the universal church, by disregarding or despising the historic faith and the historic experience. On the other hand he must not, with the Roman Catholic, seek the ultimate source of religious knowledge in a tradition theoretically co-ordinated with revelation, but practically supreme over it, nor with the Mystic Theology, attempt to find it in a "christian consciousness" which, like all forms of consciousness, is fugacious and shifting, and therefore liable to

deterioration. These two extremes, involving three species of subjectivity, will be avoided by him who does not regard either the individual or the general christian mind as upon an equality, in any sense, with the Scriptures, but believes that both the individual and the church, in all ages, are to be subjected, both in respect to doctrine and experience, to the tests of a wisdom more unerring than that of the best and wisest of human minds or of human societies; the wisdom of an infallible inspiration.

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